

H. Police V. S. &
OBSERVATIONS *K*

ON THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

PAROCHIAL AND VAGRANT

P O O R.

L O N D O N,

Printed for EDWARD and CHARLES DILLY, in the Poultry.

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RESERVATIONS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

PARLIAMENTARY



F. O. R.

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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE STATE OF THE

P O O R.

THE number of vagrant poor in this nation, especially in and about the capital, has long afforded just cause of complaint to the public. That it is a nuisance perpetually obtruded on our notice, and, as such, ought to be removed, all will readily acknowledge; but the most eligible method of removing it, is a subject concerning which few will be found unanimous.

By some it may be asserted, that a remedy adequate to the disease is already provided; that were the powers of the vagrant act uniformly and vigorously exerted, those spectacles of apparent misery need no more be visible in England, than in Holland and other countries, where, it

is geneaally supposed, there are no beggars. But the vagrant act *, like many other laws, defeats its own purposes by the severity of its penalties. By this act, " All persons wandering abroad and begging " are to be deemed rogues and vagabonds," and punished with whipping or imprisonment; and not till after such flagellation or confinement, can the culprit be legally conveyed to his settlement. Here is no distinction made between the vilest impostor, and the most inoffensive accidentally distressed traveller : the magistrate, if he acts according to law, is constrained (however widely cases may differ) indiscriminately to punish before he can relieve. Can it then be justly thought matter of surprize, that the apprehension of vagrants is discouraged, rather than encouraged, by persons cautious of injuring their fellow-creatures? Avarice must have totally eradicated sensibility from the breast of him, who could devote an unhappy human being to the whipping post, or house of correction, merely for asking charity.

* The vagrant act of the 17th of George II. Vide Burn's Justice of Peace, edition 1770. vol. iv. pages 305, 308, 310.

It will probably be objected, that all vagrants are impostors; and that whipping and imprisonment will surely not be deemed punishments too severe for villains, who insult the understanding of their benefactors, excite their compassion by false appearances, and laugh and riot at their expence. That punishment is richly merited by such, cannot be disputed; but that all the misery we behold is not fictitious, is equally indisputable. There is an article in the London general bill of mortality, which evinces the truth of this position, and annually reproaches us with inexcuseable negligence or unpardonable cruelty; "Starved" is an expression that must strike with horror every ear, to which custom has not rendered it familiar. Indeed, to insert in a catalogue of diseases and casualties which no precaution can avoid and no skill remedy, the name of an effect which human interposition might prevent as with the lifting up of a finger, is to fix an indelible stigma of infamy on our moral and political character. "Instances of persons thus perishing," it may be said, "are rare; and, whenever they exist, must proceed only from igno-

" rance of the distress; since no man, with
 " the power of relief in his hand, could
 " see his fellow creature suffer to extre-
 " mity." The supposition of ignorance
 can scarcely be admitted: to imagine any
 one would perish without complaining, or
 that none could be found to complain to,
 were absurd. But it is chiefly by novelty
 that our passions are affected: incidents
 that frequently occur, are regarded with
 indifference. We shudder at a story of
 seamen, whose provision has failed them
 in the midst of the ocean; we regret the
 impossibility of knowing their situation,
 and giving them assistance. We are told
 of a family in the next village, or the next
 street, falling victims to disease aggravated
 by poverty. Here is a circumstance merit-
 ing commiseration equally with that, which
 has drawn tears from our eyes, and sighs
 from our bosoms; here is the information
 and the ability we so earnestly wished to
 possess: but the case is common; therefore
 the account is given and received without
 emotion, and vanishes from memory like
 the dream of the morning. If, from a
 minute detail of peculiar sufferings, or
 from the urgency of the narrator's appli-
 cation,

cation, the minds of any receive a transient impression of pity, still these will find reasons for self-exemption when their aid is requested: "The account may be exaggerated; the sufferer may have resources, of which the recommender is unapprised, for, to the deserving indigent, resources can never be wanting; some friend he has formerly obliged, some master he has formerly served; some family, with which by the exercise of domestic offices he may have formerly been connected, will surely extend the hand of liberality for his sustenance. *Charity begins at home*; and the demands of their own relatives or dependants must first be satisfied: at least there are those, on whom the duty of relieving is more incumbent, as their opulence is greater, and by whom it either is or will be performed." Thus, what every man should do, is left to be done by another; the burthen, which all allow ought to be borne, is shifted from shoulder to shoulder, and at length transferred to the parish, which is frequently neither disposed nor obliged to accept it. "But whoever may be culpable in the affair, the proportion of ten or
 " twenty

“ twenty individuals, who possibly may
 “ perish in a year for want of necessaries,
 “ to the multitudes perishing from other
 “ and inevitable causes, is certainly a pro-
 “ portion too inconsiderable to call for
 “ censure on the conduct of a whole com-
 “ munity.” Such will probably be the
 language of those, by whom the life of
 man is held in light estimation. These
 few individuals, nevertheless, are every one
 too many; and from the known defects
 of our periodical registers of mortality*,
 there is reason to suspect, that more really
 die of famine than those who are found
 dead in the streets; yet such only, it is
 presumed, are ranked under the article in

* These records are compiled, not from the report
 of the attending physician or apothecary, but from that
 of two ignorant females commonly called Searchers.
 To judge from these accounts, it might be supposed
 convulsions were the principal endemic of England, as
 they are said to be of the country of Des Valles in Peru.*
 The pulmonic consumption is represented as the next
 most powerful destroyer; though, under that article,
 may probably be placed a very great number of deaths
 occasioned by disorders essentially different, and proba-
 bly many produced by filthiness and hunger.

• Vide Ulloa's Voyage to South America.

question;

question: this article also is confined to one city of an extensive and populous nation.

There are, indeed, advocates for avarice, who will plead strenuously for the indulgence of their favourite passion; who, in the vestry, are as ready to advance arguments for withholding legal provision from the poor, as elsewhere to excuse themselves, and dissuade their acquaintance, from the donation of casual alms; endeavouring, with the genuine spirit of diabolism, to seduce others to their own state of criminality, that their conduct may be justified by the general consent of a multitude. These will assert with confidence, that, "if any
" suffer want, the fault is their own;
" since all have settlements, and might (if
" they would be provided for*):" this,

* This vulgar error is countenanced by the author of the Spectator in the following passage—"I see no occasion for this charity to common beggars, since every
" beggar is an inhabitant of a parish, and every parish
" is taxed to the maintenance of their own poor." Spectator No. 232.

This popular writer mistook inhabitant for parishioner.—Every inhabitant is not a parishioner; and none but parishioners, are intitled to a maintenance.

however, is the misrepresentation of design, or the mistake of ignorance.

We are informed by very respectable authority, that, according to the tenor of our present statutes, the point appears extremely doubtful, whether it be possible for a native of Scotland or Ireland by any means to obtain a settlement in England. Such persons therefore, however distressed, cannot be lawfully relieved, nor indeed conveyed to the place of their nativity, but by the previous commission of an act of vagrancy and consequent subjection to its penalties. The circumstance of a foreigner is yet worse: he can be neither relieved nor removed; but, like the Israelitish lord in the gate of Samaria, must perish in the sight of untasted profusion. To the eternal dishonor of the constructors of our laws, it stands upon record, as the judicial opinion of a lawyer eminent in his profession*, "That he did not know that a "foreigner had a right to be "maintained in any place to which he

* Holt. Lord chief justice. Vide Burn. ed. 1762. vol. iii. p. 13.

“ came, but that they might let him
 “ starve*.”

The doubt respecting the settlement of a foreigner, arises from some words in the statute †, which seem to confine the whole of its operation to the poor of England and Wales. “ The question is,” says Dr. Brown, “ whether if a Scotchman or Irish-
 “ man” [or foreigner, for in this respect they are all under one predicament] “ had
 “ rented a tenement of ten pounds per
 “ annum, a situation which the law calls
 “ unremoveable, and had continued forty
 “ days therein, he would have gained a
 “ settlement thereby. If it is answered in
 “ the affirmative, then this will follow,
 “ that if he comes to reside upon a tene-
 “ ment under ten pounds a year, and gives
 “ notice in writing, and causes the same
 “ to be published as the law requires, and
 “ continues forty days after such publica-

* It may be said, that foreigners are relieved as casual poor: this may sometimes be the case; but as there is no compulsory law to enforce the extension of such relief, those who are acquainted with the general conduct of parishes, will easily guess how often it will be extended.

† Act of 13 & 14 Car. III

“ tion

" tion unremoved, he must by the same
 " statute gain a settlement; and if so, a
 " Scotchman or Irishman may settle him-
 " self and his family in forty days time
 " in any parish whatsoever, where he can
 " procure any little cottage to live in, by
 " giving and causing to be published such
 " notice as aforesaid. On the other hand,
 " if we have recourse to the observation
 " abovementioned, and say that this statute
 " extends only to the poor of England
 " and Wales; then this will follow, that
 " a Scotchman or Irishman can gain no
 " settlement in England by virtue of this
 " statute; and, if not by this, then not
 " by any other of the subsequent statutes
 " concerning settlements, for that they all
 " are relative thereunto, and depending
 " thereupon; that is to say, in these cir-
 " cumstances a Scotchman or Irishman can
 " gain no settlement in England, neither
 " by renting ten pounds a year, nor by
 " continuing forty days after notice, nor
 " by apprenticeship, nor by service, nor
 " by paying parish rates, nor by serving a
 " parish office. The practice seems to be
 " universally allowed in favour of the for-
 " mer opinion." Thus far the judicious
 Dr.

Dr. Burn in the eleventh edition of his valuable work: in a prior edition, he remarks on this identical circumstance, " That it is a dilemma, which, as far as " he hath observed, has not yet been solved " or considered."

But supposing the favourable opinion frequently adopted, it still is matter of courtesy not of obligation, and may be rejected by every litigious or penurious vestry, that chooses to dissent from the practice of others. Is there not also sufficient cause to believe, that the law will oftener be thus interpreted in the case of the rich foreigner, than the poor one; of him from whom some advantage may be procured, rather than of him by whose admission as a parishioner, incumbrance and expence present or future will probably be incurred? Even were the law in this point explicit, and a settlement by publication of notice, and forty days subsequent residence, certainly obtainable, is it not unreasonable to imagine, that an illiterate Scotchman, Irishman or foreigner can be acquainted with methods of proceeding, to which many of our own countrymen

trymen in stations none of the meanest are absolute strangers?

Such was the wisdom, and such the humanity of our ancestors! Such were the regulations of legislators, just emerging from the gloom of Feudal barbarism, and fraught with the spirit of times, when the poor were slaves to the lords of the soil, and the limitation of property in birds and beasts * was esteemed an object of greater importance than the care of our own species! But indeed even then, previous to the existence of our present defective establishments, the situation of the dependent rank of society, was not without its advantages; advantages perhaps preferable to any which those establishments have produced: if the haughty and ferocious temper of the gothic age, was not more propitious to their interests than the commercial character of the present, a circumstance existed, by which the effect of the public manners was powerfully counteracted. The age was devout, and notwithstanding its devotion might be misinformed or misdirected, it answered at

* The game laws.

least one good purpose; the national religion taught the doctrine of merit, derivable from works of charity and mercy: this influenced the conduct of both clergy and laity; and the hope of reward, and the sense of duty, co-operated with the dictates of compassion in favour of the distressed*.

By the rude illiterate Englishmen, the ignorant despiser of other nations, it will naturally be said, that "Foreigners have no business here; that they should remain in their own countries, and there be maintained." The intrusion of multitudes migrating from regions of oppression and sterility, to devour the produce of our good land, the subsistence of our own people, is equally unlikely to happen, and improper to receive encouragement: but numerous and laudable are the motives, which may sometimes induce a foreigner to quit his native country; and numerous and truly pitiable are the situations wherein

* The charity of the ecclesiastics was so absolutely necessary to the support of the poor that on the dissolution of the religious houses they soon became very numerous and destitute. Vide Burn. ed. 1762. vol. iii. pag. 4.

he may be placed, to require our assistance. The fidelity of domestics, and the dexterity of artificers, are by no means exclusively peculiar to our own island: service, according to the common observation, is no inheritance; and a time must arrive, when the strongest eye will become dim, and the firmest hand tremulous; when industry will no longer avail the industrious, nor ingenuity the ingenious: and the denial of a maintenance in the season of age and infirmity, to those whose youth and health have contributed to the supply of our wants, or the indulgence of our pleasures, merely because they are unfortunately unable to claim one privileged spot of ground for the place of their nativity, however authorized by law, can never be justified on the principles of equity.

The natural affection of relations, is common to the rich and to the poor: the latter, from causes peculiar to their circumstances, are more frequently subjected to involuntary separation; parental, filial, and conjugal tenderness will as frequently produce visits to its absent object, even in the most distant situations: sickness, or disappointments, often reduce to the

the

the extremest necessity those who imagined themselves provided for every exigence of their journey; and the alone resource of such is accidental charity. Of such wanderers from county to county, and from nation to nation, the majority of those who publicly supplicate relief, is probably composed.

But many are unhappily constrained to become beggars, within the limits of their own parishes. In cases of distress, the sufferer's natural and legal application is to the parish officer; the parish officer, perhaps from native obduracy, perhaps from inattention, and perhaps from private pique, refuses to relieve; and the complainant's dernier resort is to the magistrate*. The remedy, however, is worse than the disease: to summon the overseer before the justice, is to commit an insult, for which pardon must never be expected: the word of a wealthy farmer, or tradesman, is of greater validity, than the oath

* Appeal to the quarter sessions is indeed open to such as may have knowledge and fortitude equal to such a procedure: but the number of such is comparatively so inconsiderable, that final decision in these cases may be said in general to rest with the justice.

of a friendless mendicant ; who is represented as neither needing nor meriting assistance, and consequently dismissed to nakedness and hunger, with an abusive joke or aggravating reprimand. Thus, starving at home, or wandering forth to punishable beggary, becomes the dreadful alternative ; and of the latter, even supposing punishment escaped, the prospect is sufficiently forbidding. Deplorable indeed is their condition, who crave a bare subsistence from door to door, or fix themselves breathing statues of misery at the corners of our streets, or on the steps of our palaces ! The busy crowd (like the priest and the levite in the parable) pass by and avert their eyes from the sorrows which, though they will not endeavor to alleviate, they cannot fail to pity. Every man's business, as the ancient adage remarks, is the business of no man ; and even an examination of the case is a trouble that will not often be taken, though probably productive of the happiest effects, the protection of injured innocence, or the discovery of pernicious imposture.

By those who will pertinaciously attempt the defence of one post, however untenable,

able, it may still be alledged, That " in
 " case of the most resolute refusal of pa-
 " rochial assistance, private charity will
 " certainly be extended to the aid of the
 " really necessitous." But he, who has
 been rejected by the parish as improper for
 its cognizance, will scarcely be able to en-
 gage the attention of individuals; since
 such rejection will be implicitly deemed a
 proof of the present ineligibility of his case
 or the criminality of his conduct: if those,
 whose more immediate business it was to
 examine the premises, have examined and
 decided, it is natural for others to abide
 by their decision, without inquiry concern-
 ing their motives. But supposing the dis-
 tress of the sufferer authenticated beyond
 a possibility of objection, and supposing
 individuals ever so much disposed to relieve,
 the finances of few will be found adequate
 to the task of effectually relieving, and
 even where ability and inclination are equal
 though occasional contributions may be
 advanced on sudden emergencies without
 hesitation, a frequent repetition or long
 continuance of expence will exhaust the
 patience of the chearfullest giver, and an
 attempt upon the pity of the public must

be the ultimate consequence; an expedient, seemingly too dreadful to be adopted by any, not under the severest pressure of necessity. Here, indeed the objection will naturally occur, "That were the situation of the common beggar so disagreeable, and his profession so unsuccessful, beggary, as an imposition, would never be practised." But although custom is said to be second nature, and the human body by the force of habit becomes less susceptible of unpleasing sensations, there is a degree of cold that must give pain even to the hardiest, and a degree of filth that must be irksome even to the most indelicate; confinement to one station, and to one posture, even if voluntary, must be considered as a punishment; yet there is an indolence by which these are patiently endured, and which may be equally insuperable by the slighter impulses of thirst and hunger. The general aversion of mankind to whatever controuls their inclinations, is so potent, that many will prefer the scantiest meal procured in the manner they approve of, to the most liberal provision acquired in ways prescribed by another. If any, by the trade of mendicancy, obtain a better
subst-

subsistence than might be obtained by labour, it must be such only, whose obvious impotence seems to justify the bestowal of alms in the most cautious, or whose clamorous importunities extort them from the most determinedly retentive; such whose misapplied talents enable them to impose on the few who vouchsafe them audience, by fictions too pitiable to be disregarded, and too consistent to be readily detected of falsehood, even by persons of no easy credulity. In the streets of the metropolis, where, from the continual concourse of passengers of infinitely diversified sentiments and dispositions, the best chance of success might be reasonably expected, the author of these pages has had the curiosity, in an hour of leisure, to remark the disproportion between the giver and refusers of relief to some one object on whom he fixed his attention; a disproportion to appearance so immense, that he thinks it scarcely probable, the diurnal earnings of the most fortunate mendicant can, on an average, much exceed the lowest wages of industry*.

Many

* The income of the common beggar is unequal and precarious; such kind of people take no thought for

Many from habitual covetousness, and others from erroneous conscience, withhold the scanty pittance, which some from inability reluctantly refuse. But of all obstacles to the spontaneous relief of vagrant poverty, none, perhaps, is more potent or more general, than the dread of imposition: while compassion melts at the apparent sufferings of a fellow-creature, pride starts at the thought of a deception. "Shall our kindness," query the humane and benevolent, "become the subject of unmerited ridicule to the villain, who triumphs in the success of his undiscovered artifices? Shall our bounty be misapplied, to support the vices of the vicious? No; rather will we, by indiscriminately rejecting every application, discountenance their trade, who prefer dishonest indolence to reputable labour."

Here, however, let it be remembered, that the crime consists not in giving, but

the morrow; and he, whom an accidental combination of propitious circumstances may enable to riot one evening in the little luxuries of the alehouse or night-cellar, may not improbably pass the next in the open street, shivering, perhaps almost perishing, with inevitable cold and hunger.

receiving,

receiving, and rests not on the head of the deceived, but of the deceiver ; of him, the detection of whose hypocrisy closes the ear, and hardens the heart of generosity, against the most piercing cries of the actually distressed ; whose guilt is the more enormous, as his iniquity is extensive in its consequences, operating to the irreparable injury of numbers of the innocent *. Let those then, who deny relief lest they should be made the dupes of an impostor's specious pretences, severely scrutinize the motives of their own conduct ; let them consider, that it is the criminal vanity of appearing to possess a sagacity superior to deceit, which restrains their hands, and produces uncharitable suspicions in their

* If it be criminal to give unnecessary pain, these impostors are culpable beyond most of their fellow-creatures. They give intellectual pain to those who are most capable of feeling, and least capable of supporting it, poignancy to those who believe their apparent distress to be real, whose delicate sensibility will not permit them to view it without emotion, and whose embarrassed circumstances will not permit them to relieve it. There are occasions on which these experience many a pang, to which minds of a different texture are strangers.

bosoms ;

bosoms ; and that the abuse of their liberality had better be a thousand times repeated, than one poor sufferer should fall a victim to their immoveable resolve of tenacity. Let those who give consider, that they give only a small portion of wealth, the absence whereof will not be perceived amidst their plenty ; that they bestow with a good intention, which will not be always frustrated ; since, if their bounty be often distributed in vain, it will sometimes assist to cheer the drooping soul of undissembled indigence, and that their recompence will be the “ blessing of him “ who is ready to perish,” and the consciousness of having endeavoured humbly to imitate the universal beneficence of that providence, whose mercies are over all his works, and who dispenses his rain and his sunshine in common to the good and to the evil *. By some, however weakly, it will be argued, that “ the donors of indiscriminate charity, far from subserving, are “ counteracting (to the utmost ability of

* The reader will find sentiments nearly similar to these, illustrated in nearly the same manner, in Law’s Serious Call. 8th edition, pag. 83.

“ a being

“ a being comparatively impotent as man)
 “ the dispositions of supreme wisdom, that
 “ distress is merited by extravagance, and
 “ that poverty is the punishment properly
 “ assigned to and naturally resulting from
 “ profusion.” But prudence and precau-
 tion are no more the virtues of the rich,
 than of the poor : and to wound with the
 tongue of reproach those on whom the
 hand of oppression lies heavy, to upbraid
 such with their former defective œconomy,
 to retort on them the opportunities and
 advantages they have enjoyed and neglect-
 ed, what once they might have procured,
 or what once they might have retained, is
 surely unbecoming creatures prone to the
 same errors, and obnoxious to the same
 sufferings ; and whose forgiveness of one
 another is made, by indisputable authority,
 the condition of their own pardon. Nei-
 ther is the cruelty of him who expatiates
 on the follies, when he ought to supply
 the necessities of the necessitous, greatly
 inferior to his, who, instead of extending
 an arm to save a drowning wretch from
 immediate destruction, should stand calm-
 ly to censure his temerity in venturing on
 the water.

Amidst

(Amidst the variety of advice, which has tended to deprive the suffering vagrant of his most liberal benefactors, by misleading men of reading and reflection, of quick feelings and generous sentiments, who may nevertheless not have sufficiently adverted to or investigated the subject, that of the judicious Dr. Burn, and the pious Mr. Hervey has probably (from the celebrity of their names) had the most powerful and extensive influence. The former, in his History of the Poor Laws, at once boldly proposes the total abolition of beggary. "This kind of charity," [occasional alms] says he, "is setting up private judgment against public law. The legislature have provided for the poor in one way; but we think it not so good, and therefore we will have a way of our own: and it fares accordingly, the laws are broken through like cobwebs; the worst and most abandoned of the people are sustained by the efforts of well-meant, but very ill-judged, charity.— Therefore, let private judgment, or rather weakness and obstinacy, give way at least for a time, and try what the laws can do. There is one infallible way to
" put

“ put an end to begging, and the easiest
 “ in the world, which consists merely in
 “ a nonfeasance : give them nothing ; if
 “ none were to give, none would beg, and
 “ the whole mystery and craft would be
 “ at an end in a fortnight.”——He fur-
 ther proposes a law to inflict pecuniary,
 or in default of property, corporal penal-
 ties on those who relieve or harbour va-
 grants.

The enactment of coercive laws, to in-
 fringe the liberty of the subject in the ap-
 plication of his property, surely should not
 have been mentioned among Englishmen ;
 and the impossibility of an uniformity of
 conduct produced by uniformity of opi-
 nion, existing in this or indeed any other
 respect is sufficiently obvious : but admit-
 ting its existence, its propriety cannot be
 admitted. The donors of voluntary cha-
 rity, by no means oppose their private
 judgment to public law : but if the law
 has made a provision for the poor, and that
 provision appears to be incompetent, or, from
 certain insurmountable difficulties inseper-
 able from almost every human institution, is
 not to be readily obtained ; the spontaneous
 almsgiver cannot justly be esteemed an offi-
 cious

cious intermeddler, but rather a needful auxiliary, who supplies the deficiency of law, when it can operate no farther, without impeaching the utility of its powers to the extent of their operation.

The celebrated Hervey, with a severity of sentiment and acrimony of expression, seemingly incompatible with the acknowledged humanity and benevolence of his character, surpasses Dr. Burn in the force of his application to the public attention on this interesting subject: "Money or victuals," says he, "bestowed on these worthless wretches, is not real beneficence, but the earnest-penny of sloth; it hires them to be good for nothing, and pays them for being public nuisances. Let us then unanimously join to shake off these dead weights from our wheels, and dislodge these swarms of vermin from our state; let us be deaf to their most importunate clamours, and assure ourselves, that by this determined inflexibility, we do God, we do our community, we do them, the most substantial service *."

There

* The disgust of the covetous at common beggars is easily accounted for. Applications for charity excite a pity

There might not, perhaps, be so much reason to controvert the rectitude of this procedure, could we be positively assured, that every one to whom relief was refused were really an impostor; but the error of

a pity, which their ruling passion will not permit them to indulge, and remind them of a duty, which it will not suffer them to perform. The conflict between sentiment and inclination produces pain; and at the cause of pain, it is natural to be offended. But what could occasion this disgust in the gentle Hervey, in whose bosom constitutional tenderness and sincere piety could surely find no opposite, his liberality of disposition seeming to have been unquestioned? Perhaps, having imbibed a powerful prejudice of the universality of imposture in the case of common beggary, and being tenacious of this favourite opinion, though at times not without misgivings concerning its rectitude, he was displeased at those appearances, by which such misgivings were excited: perhaps he had been insulted and ill-treated by some of those sturdy vagabonds, who among the vast variety of characters that ask alms, are too often met with; and judging by them of others, he might readily conceive an aversion to the whole race of mendicants.

I have been the more particular with regard to Hervey, as the opinion of so amiable and respectable a character, and so popular a writer, may possibly have great weight with many.

these

these writers consists, in taking for granted what remains to be proved, that vagrancy and imposition are constantly united, and so precipitately arranging under one common predicament, and peremptorily consigning to one common punishment, the guilty and the innocent. But a proper distinction ought to have been made; and before the extirpation of the former had been so energetically recommended, its consistence with the preservation of the latter should have been clearly demonstrated. The annihilation of imposture is as certainly a good, as the aggravation of distress is an evil; but if the production of the good, and the commission of the evil, are necessarily connected, it is surely the part of wisdom and of virtue to reject them both together.

The cases of the distressed itinerant mendicant, and unfortunate parochial pauper, are indeed cases that have too generally escaped observation; yet it is evident, that were the sources of voluntary charity to be universally and suddenly obstructed, numbers of these comparatively inoffensive subjects must irremediably perish. Nor is it certain, that such would
be

be the only sufferers: it is well known there are many stationary beggars, who are found on the same spot day after day, for years together, imploring alms with the same earnest vociferation, persecuting as it were the passer into charity; many, whose loss of eyes or limbs seems to authorize, or at least apologize for their petitions: many, who have or pretend to have received injury in sea or land engagements, and thereby interest in their favour the passions of a people, piqueing themselves on their heroism, and too jealous of their national character to neglect intirely the disabled veteran, who has fought for his country. These, perhaps, of all others, have the least claim to our pity or indulgence, as making beggary their profession: yet, were an instantaneous vicissitude in the public conduct to take place, it is to be feared that many even of these so unexpectedly deprived of their wonted mode of subsistence, must fall victims to Dr. Burn's fortnight's experiment of nonfeasance, or Mr. Hervey's doctrine of determined inflexibility*.

Very

* The rational idea of punishment is that its severity should be proportioned to the atrocity of the crime;

but

Very different from their opinions, was the opinion of lord chief justice Hale, a man, whom none can reasonably suspect of intellectual weakness or facility to imposition, of want of knowledge in the laws, or want of discernment to judge of their efficacy; who, nevertheless, enforced his precept by example, in spite of the remonstrances of his less humane and less judicious acquaintance *. "What man, observes

but the frauds of mendicancy cannot be sufficiently injurious to society, to merit a penalty so severe as death. If therefore we are reduced to the unhappy dilemma of encouraging vice, or destroying our fellow creatures by hunger, it is easy to see, that the lesser evil of the two should be chosen.

* The conduct of the celebrated Pascal is another striking instance in favour of the practice of universal liberality. The author of his life informs us, that he loved the poor with such tenderness, that he was never known to refuse an alms, though he bestowed it out of the money which was set apart for necessary expences, having no superfluity of wealth, and being obliged on account of frequent indispositions to spend more than his income. When his friends remonstrated against this seeming excess of charity, he replied, I have observed one thing, that however poor, a man always leaves something at his death.—In a paper found after his decease, he says, "I love poverty, because
" Jesus

observes he, "that is of ability, can have
 "the conscience to deny an alms, when
 "he cannot choose but know, that there
 "is not that due course provided, at least
 "used, that persons necessitous and able
 "to work may have it? Indeed were there
 "a clear manner practiced of employing
 "poor persons, it were an uncharitable
 "action to relieve them in a course of
 "idleness: but when I do not know whe-
 "ther there is such a provision, I dare
 "not deny my relief, because I know not
 "whether, without it, he may not be
 "starved without his own default." The
 laws, since the time of Hale, have received
 little or no improvement; nor have his ar-
 guments been answered, or his sentiments
 convicted of impropriety.

During the present situation of things,
 it appeared absolutely necessary thus to
 plead the cause of the poor and needy, thus
 strenuously to recommend the exertion of
 voluntary charity; nevertheless, it is na-
 tural to wish the number of the objects of

"Jesus Christ loved it; I love riches; because they
 "afford means to assist the indigent." *Vie de Pascal*
 par M. Perier, preface, 83, 96.

such charity could, by methods consistent with humanity, be diminished. The appearance of ghastly countenances and mutilated bodies haunting our most frequented avenues, is certainly not more disgusting to the delicacy of individuals, than reproachful to the character of the community. Rags and vermin, squalidity and disease, extravagance of luxury in food, dress, equipage, and architecture, perhaps never exceeded by the wanton prodigality of Asia or Rome in their pristine opulence, exhibited together in one picture, form a contrast too striking to escape the attention of the most inattentive and the censure of the least censorious. Yet, vast as is the disparity in the external circumstances of beings placed by nature on an equality, it is not by any means designed to inculcate the principles of the leveller, who would violate the subordination of society, by degrading the rich, and elevating the poor above their proper station; but merely to intimate, that the point of decency is a point beneath which none of the latter should ever be permitted to experience depression. The propriety of aiming at this state of political perfection cannot be denied,

nied, but the readiest means of attaining it will not be easily ascertained.

In the preceeding part of these observations, the prevalence of public beggary has been in great measure attributed to parochial mismanagement, a circumstance now naturally occurring to consideration.

There is not, perhaps, any subject, concerning which complaint has been more frequently and earnestly repeated, than the expence of supporting the poor within their respective parishes; an expence which, however different in different places *, is

* In some parishes not more than two shillings, or one shilling and six pence, perhaps less, in others four, five, and it has been said, six and seven shillings in the pound per annum. As a proof that severe methods often injure the poor more than they ease the parish; the writer of these lines is well acquainted with two adjacent parishes, in respect to their proportion of poor, &c. nearly alike circumstanced. In one, the powers of the act of 9 George I. are exerted with the utmost rigor; none, on any account, are allowed relief, except in the workhouse; and the poor are frequently distressed and reduced to solicit the charity of individuals: in the other an opposite conduct takes place, none suffer or complain; and the enormous difference in the parochial rate is only a third, being in one two shillings, in the other three shillings in the pound per annum.

represented in the general as a heavy tax on the middle ranks of society; various efforts have accordingly been made for its diminution: but, after all, the institution of workhouses seems to be the *ne plus ultra* of human sagacity; and has, indeed, but too effectually answered its intention, operating equally to the emolument of the maintainers and the disadvantage of the maintained. How far this institution under proper regulations might be subservient to the interests of the former, without producing detriment to the latter, is not now the question: to decide on the propriety of things, we must view them in their real, not in their possible situations.

The statute of 9 George I. is a dreadful engine of oppression; the existence whereof can never be sufficiently deprecated by those, who are unhappily reduced to depend on the public for their subsistence. By means of this statute, the parochial managers are impowered to establish a set of petty tyrants as their substitutes, who farming the poor at a certain price accumulate dishonest wealth, by abridging them of reasonable food, and imposing on them unreasonable labour. A thorough acquaintance

tance with the interior œconomy of these wretched receptacles of misery, or rather “ parish prisons,” called workhouses, is not easily to be acquired: in these, as in other arbitrary governments, complaint is mutiny and treason, to every appearance of which a double portion of punishment is invariably annexed: particular incidents shocking to humanity, may have sometimes transpired; but the whole mystery of iniquity perhaps never has been, nor ever will be developed. One thing is too publicly known to admit of denial, that those workhouses are scenes of filthiness and confusion; that old and young, sick and healthy, are promiscuously crowded into ill-contrived apartments, not of sufficient capacity to contain with convenience half the number of miserable beings condemned to such deplorable inhabitation; and that speedy death is almost ever to the aged and infirm, and often to the youthful and robust, the consequence of a removal from more salubrious air to such mansions of putridity. Well then may the indigent dread confinement within their walls, as the worst of evils; well may they execrate that parochial policy, which, by thus propagating disease and

producing mortality, accelerates with impunity the removal of a burthen, to which the shoulder of avarice has ever submitted with evident reluctance. It may, indeed, be said, that the idea of intention in this respect must be erroneous; that few parish officers are philosophers enough to perceive remote effects in their initial causes, and fewer still sufficiently wicked to evade expence by methods so unjustifiable. But the knowledge of the pernicious influence of corrupted air, and distempered bodies, has been of late very extensively diffused; and although it may not be often with a direct design against their lives, that the poor are placed within the sphere of that influence; yet, when the probable consequences are known and not prevented, the neglect of such prevention is an indication that those consequences will be viewed with secret complacency. In this case the procedure is a second hand kind of murder, not punishable by human laws, but certainly cognizable at the supreme tribunal of unerring justice. Nor is retribution always postponed to futurity: the transition from authority to servitude, from wanton opulence to abject poverty, is some-

Sometimes little less than instantaneous; crushed by the pressure of unexpected misfortune, the temple of Plutus reared with the price of blood, suddenly falls, and involves the unhappy builder in its ruins.

The patrons of the practice of farming workhouses will undoubtedly pretend, that it is not injurious to the poor; but, on the contrary, greatly conducive to their advantage: on such supposed advantage, they will probably expatiate; and endeavour to amuse with pleasing descriptions of the regularity, industry, plenty, and contentment of their little communities: But the reverse of the picture will be found the resemblance of the truth. Good fruit cannot be produced from a tree that is evil, right consequences cannot proceed from premises founded on wrong principles; yet, from indolence and avarice only, can this iniquitous custom derive its origin. The lessors of workhouses can have no rational inducement for their conduct, but the avoidance of trouble to themselves, and the procuring the support of their poor at an easier expence than it could be procured under their own inspection: but, in thus eluding the performance of a duty they

have undertaken to perform, and transferring those committed to their care to the hands of strangers, instead of being, as they ought to be, fathers to the fatherless, friends of the friendless, and helpers of the helpless, they become in effect the most powerful of their enemies. If the contract in these cases be at a certain price for every individual, that price is fixed at the lowest sum for which it is supposed a human being can retain a miserable existence: if for a certain annual stipend for the whole number of paupers which the parish contracting can furnish, the exactest calculation that can be produced from experience of past facts, or speculation of future probabilities, is formed previous to agreement; and the hazard of unexpected contingencies must still be run by the contractor: yet evident it is, that no one would undertake a business so productive of trouble, and so obnoxious to ignominy, without a prospect of ample repayment. If then he, who engages to maintain the poor cheaper than they can be otherwise maintained, has still a profit from their maintenance; to discover whence that profit must arise, requires no remarkable share of

of penetration: the power of oppression is in his hand, and he must use it, the gains of oppression are within his reach, and he must not refuse them*.

Indeed, were the farm of a workhouse a situation wherein it were possible to obtain reasonable pecuniary advantages uncontaminated with injury, it is nevertheless a

* I have been informed by a substantial landholder, that a parish with which he was connected, once contracted for their paupers with a certain noted farmer of the poor, at sixty pounds per annum; he had forgot the number sent, but it may reasonably be supposed it was something adequate to the sum paid to the contractor. The place they were sent to, was near twenty miles distant from the parish contracting; and so sensible were the officers of the impropriety of their conduct, that they sent the poor by night in order to elude the public observation and censure. They were treated with so much rigor, that, after a few years had elapsed, the overseers thought proper to make inquiry into the affair; and my informant, who was then in the office, assured me, that they found, the number by death and escapes reduced to eight only, and those mostly children who bore evident marks of injury from disease and hunger: one of the elopers was said to have perished under a hay-stack. The parochial workhouses are commonly badly enough managed; but the management of these extra parochial ones is worse beyond comparison.

situation,

situation, wherein no man, however amiable his disposition, or unexceptionable his character, ought to be trusted. The deviation from virtue to vice is but too easy: no man can say to day, that he shall resist the temptation of to-morrow; the rage of avarice increases with increase of age and riches; familiarity with misery renders us insensible to its influence; and there are possibly those now among the most inexorable of oppressors, who, as some past period of life, had their present conduct been shewn them in perspective, would have beheld it with abhorrence, and exclaimed with the Syrian of old, "Am I a dog, that I should do this thing?" Whoever, therefore, knowing the fallibility of human nature, occasions the seduction of his brother, by thus leading him into almost irresistible temptation, participates of his guilt; and incurs the punishment of those, who contribute to diffuse misery through the works of a merciful and benevolent creator.

No very extensive acquaintance either with the history of remote ages, or with recent transactions, is indeed necessary to prove, that the exercise of cruelty is too frequently

frequently a concomitant of the acquisition of power. But cruelty is different in character, as of different original: the cruelty of ambition, of anger, and of amusement, is severe; it is the cruelty of a Nero, or a Domitian: but the cruelty of interest is severer; it is a cruelty of a Metyard, or a Brownrigg *, or the farmer of a workhouse.

But oppression, some will say, is not the natural or indispensable result of parochial contracts, but rather the fortuitous effect of disposition in the person contracting; since the difference of expence in separately and collectively subsisting a given number of individuals, is so important, that he who, on the same allowance in one case would starve, would in the other have no just reason to complain. But must not these alter their opinion, when informed, that the weekly pittance of two shillings per head † is frequently the condition of wain-

* Two female wretches, who at two different periods of time, viz. the years 1762 and 1767 starved and tortured to death innocent children committed to their care as apprentices by the parish.

† Although my sentiments on the subject of vagrancy were unavoidably dissimilar to those of the ingenious

maintenance for adults and children, able and impotent together; a price, considering the present rate of provisions, plainly demonstrating, that unsatisfied hunger to all, and oppressive labour to many, must be the consequence? What wonder then, if those contractors, as has been credibly asserted, sometimes detach their unserviceable invalids, those by whom work cannot possibly be performed, into the streets, to infest the public in the character of beggars.

Dr. Burn, it gives me pleasure to have the sanction of his opinion on the present occasion. "The above-mentioned statute of 9 Geo. c. 7." he observes, "hath been very beneficial in practice; but the matter seemeth at length to have been carried too far; the overseers in many places having found out a method of contracting with some obnoxious person of savage disposition for the maintenance of their poor, not with any intention of the poor being better provided for, but to hang over them in terrorem if they will not be satisfied with the pittance which the overseers think fit to allow them: and one such task-master oftentimes undertakes for the poor of several parishes or townships. But the justices have power, by withholding their assent, to prevent any bad use being made of this kind of traffic." Burn's Just. ed. 1769. vol. iii. pag. 507.

But

But it will be alledged, that all work-houses are not farmed; that there are many where the superintendent neither finds subsistence for the poor, nor reaps the advantage of their labour, but is merely a servant of the parish, paid for the trouble of his superintendence by the officers, who themselves procure provision for the house, and receive its earnings. This plan is infinitely preferable to the former; but probably the number of parishes wherein it is adopted, is comparatively inconsiderable. Neither is it incapable of abuse: on the virtue of the overseer, depends the happiness of his paupers; nor is even he certain, that the portion of work which he exacts is all that is really exacted, as an additional quota may be clandestinely imposed by the workhouse-keeper for his own emolument.

The very appearance of many of these receptacles of wretched poverty is formidable even to those, who are under no apprehension of ever becoming their inhabitants: they wear, without, the marks of dereliction and decay; while emaciated forms, with looks of unavailing sorrow or surlily discontent, people like unhappy spectres the melancholy gloom within, and
watch

watch with earnest solicitude the motions of their implacable master. And no extensive stretch of imagination is requisite, to aggravate them into a resemblance of the enchanted castles of romance, whose ferocious giants held their reign over miserable captives, and subsisted on the fruits of rapine and murder.

But admitting the credibility of all that has been or can be said of the humanity and generosity of some of these parochial vicegerents, the farmers or managers of workhouses; the indiscriminate compulsion of all who sue for parochial relief, under their dominion, is the origin of numberless distresses. Attachment to one situation, is the natural consequence of long-continued residence; and this foible seems to operate equally through all ranks of the community: the cottager is as fond of his cottage, as the tradesman of his shop, or the gentleman of his villa. There is often a secret wish, not easily accounted for, to resign the breath of life on the same spot where it was received; there is often as unaccountable an affection for some particular convenience of habitation. Such things, indeed, are of little importance in reality,

reality; but they are of much in idea; and in idea, exist many of our sublimest pains and pleasures. Yet the moment the unhappy indigent accepts the fatal boon of parish allowance, all right to indulgence in circumstances of this nature becomes forever forfeited: the entry of his name on the book, is the irrevocable act, by which he commences bond slave of the vestry, and surrenders the property of his body at discretion to the disposal of his new masters, fastened to their hard servitude by the indissoluble chain of invincible necessity: for, in the present state of things, no man, while support can elsewhere be obtained, will solicit it from the parish.

On this reluctant, but inevitable acceptance, frequently ensues the dissolution of families, which by a trivial assistance might have been held together in the enjoyment of their little domestic felicities. The husband is, perhaps, incapable of labour, the wife is not, he only therefore will be deemed a proper object of public charity: the parochial divorce of consequence takes place; the tender connexion is broken; one is committed to the workhouse, and the other left to pine in artificial widowhood.

hood. The unfortunate parent, in that season of debility when the officious cares of filial affection are most requisite for the alleviation of those painful infirmities common to the greatest and the meanest of mortals, is ravished from the arms of his dutiful and assiduous offspring, and transferred to the management of those whom interest is continually stimulating to oppression.

Here, undoubtedly, will be pleaded the propriety of maintaining those whom we are obliged to maintain, in the manner wherein we choose they should be maintained * ; that they, by whom the expence

* In some of those few parishes, where allowance out of the workhouse is permitted, an unkind and indelicate practice frequently obtains. The parish vouchsafes a trifling pittance of a pension; and an industrious son or daughter, from the earnings of their industry, supplies the remainder of the maintenance of the aged or decrepit parent. In such cases, an inventory of what little household furniture may be in the pauper's possession is immediately taken, in order that it may revert to the parish at his decease. The poor have sensibility; and it is really cruel to treat as criminals, whose property is confiscated, those who in this respect have no crime but inevitable poverty.

must

must be supported, have surely a right to direction in the mode of expending. But however consistent this specious reasoning may be with the commonly received definitions of justice, its fallacy will not escape detection by that Being, with whom the distinctions of honour and dishonour among men are not accounted of; who beholds the high and the low with an eye of paternal regard, which surveys at one comprehensive glance the whole of creation; and who has vouchsafed to his rational creatures the revelation of one grand criterion of morality, one standard of rectitude by which the actions of every man should be measured, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." In cases, however, where the salutary influence of this divine precept is not properly attended to, it is undeniably certain, that interest must powerfully operate to the disadvantage of the poor, and that without remedy. The workhouse, as has been hinted, is the maintenance of its keeper; he, with eyes fascinated by Mammon the god of this world, through the filthy mist of lucre beholds,

D

objects

objects indistinctly, mistakes inability for obstinacy, and urges the incapable to toil with the unrelenting severity of an Egyptian taskmaster. The overseer is frequently the principal occupier*, and, as such the most interested

* In parochial administrations, the ostensible minister, the nominal overseer, is sometimes a person of inferior rank; but the king of the parish still acts behind the scene, and the overseer dares not alter his arrangements. Happy the parish that has a good king! This, however, is too rarely the case: a superficial observation of the conduct of mankind will probably be sufficient to discover, that none are severer enemies of the poor than the principal landholders. These men are on the ladder of ambition, exerting their utmost endeavours to attain a little eminence, whence they may overlook the level of their neighbours; and every thing that retards their ascent, excites their anger and detestation. These will probably plead, that they have the most reason to be severe to the poor, as they are the greatest sufferers by maintaining them. But the plea is frivolous. No tax is imposed on any business, but on the supposition that its profits will admit of such a deduction: he, therefore, who by extensive business obtains large profits, cannot with justice complain, if his deduction be large in proportion: if a farm of 20 l. per annum gain 20 l. and another of 100 l. gain 100 l. one pays 4 l. the other 20 l. to the poor's-rate; wherein then is the difference? It has been remarked with some seeming degree of justice

interested person in the parish*: he consults his own advantage in avoiding all expence

tice, that the landholder pays more to the poor tax in proportion than country traders or manufacturers, whose income may be great and their annual rent of occupation small. These would indeed be affected by the taxation of stock, were it universally practiced, but it does seem not proper that it should be so, except in the case of such manufactories as produce, or such shops as sell, luxuries only. Necessaries are too dear already, and the dealer in them cannot support a deduction of 5 per cent from the profits of his trade; there must, therefore, be an adequate rise in the price of his commodities, to the injury of the consumer.—Most trades also are loaded with parliamentary taxes, from which the farmer is exempted. That the present high price of the produce of agriculture is more than equal to the disadvantages of advanced rents, and unkind seasons, is evident from the avidity with which farms are taken, and the expensive manners introduced into rural life. The landlords, with consummate wisdom, are involving their estates, by pursuing the fashionable town vices; and the tenants are raising fortunes to purchase them: the rustic, of consequence, becomes the independant gentleman; and the independant gentleman, when his fortune is spent, is elevated to the envied dignity of wearing a court livery.

* I was once informed by an aged diseased female pauper that on an application for relief to one of these

expenditure which he deems superfluous; and consequently justifies the keeper of the workhouse in all his illegal or inhuman proceedings.

The magistrate is not less frequently the landlord of the overseer, and naturally supports his tenant, in schemes both immediately and remotely conducive * to his pecuniary emolument. The scale of parsimony and tyranny is thus compleat; the opulent are combined against the indigent; and all means of redress for the injuries of the latter, are totally precluded. It must not be imagined, that it is here intended to include, in one common censure, so respectable a body of men as the magistracy and yeomanry of a whole nation. That evil

rural bashaws, all the satisfaction she received was a menace of being kicked off his premises—I gave her a recommendation to a magistrate, which as no farther complaint was made had I suppose its desired effect.

* Immediately in his own assessment, remotely in that of his tenant, who the lesser tax he pays can afford to pay the greater rent; and, on the contrary, if he be burthened with the former, will require to be proportionally eased in the latter; consequently the landlord will be the ultimate sufferer: what wonder then if he connives at oppression?

effects

effects will result from evil causes, and that too few have virtue superior to the love of money *, is an assertion that must be readily acquiesced in by all who impartially consider the subject: nevertheless, there are undoubtedly many who, induced by native generosity, or acting on principle with a noble self-denial of their own inclinations, would willingly treat the deserving and even undeserving poor with all possible lenity; but the hands of these are confined by the power of that execrable law †, which absurdly renders every obstinate

* It is much to the honor of the people called quakers, that, besides contributing to the parochial assessment in common with others, they maintain the indigent members of their society at their own expence in a decent and reputable manner. Inquiry is constantly made by a stationary query at their periodical meetings for business, whether the poor are well provided for, and care taken of the education of their offspring. Many of them likewise, in their individual capacity, are far from being deficient in acts of occasional charity; though some few, may, perhaps, think their double contribution abovementioned, a dispensation for their omissions of this kind.

† “ If any poor person shall refuse to be lodged kept
“ or maintained in such house or houses, he shall be put

nate illiterate barbarian of an overseer, or church warden, in this respect the absolute master of his superiors.

By this time it may be thought that the disease is sufficiently described, and the discovery of a rational method of cure should now be the object of attention: but that this a task of no easy accomplishment, the ill-success of all who have hitherto attempted it, has sufficiently testified. Whether this is to be accounted for from the inefficacy of the proposed remedies, or the negligence of those who alone had the power of application, the confidence of succeeding after such repeated failures, might justly be imputed to a superabundance of vanity. But the author of these lines is no political empiric; he boasts no infallible catholicon, that has escaped the researches of others; his intention was

“ out of the parish book, and shall not be entitled to receive relief from the church wardens and overseers.”

9 Geo. I. c. 7. In consequence of this clause, disobedience of an overseer to an order of the quarter sessions of Cumberland for relief to a pauper out of the workhouse, was justified by the opinion of the judges at the assizes before whom the question was laid for determination. Vide Burn. ed. 11. vol. iii. p. 504.

rather

rather to point out what is wrong, than to attempt its rectification: a few hints on what he thinks the deficiencies or mistakes of some of his predecessors, and a few hints of probable improvements, is all he pretends to offer to the acceptance of the public.

With some who have written on this subject of the poor, the diminition of expence to the maintainers, rather than the production of benefit to the maintained, seems intrinsically if not professedly the grand desideratum. But what is this expence that it should be so grudged, and this tax that it should be so heavily complained of; while other expences, and other taxes, infinitely more unnecessary and infinitely more oppressive, are spontaneously incurred and implicitly complied with? Have we not all our different superfluities, unknown to our forefathers; our conveniencies and elegancies, never required by simple nature, but created by the efforts of a wanton imagination, and rendered by custom indispensable appendages to the possession of property? Is not the air we breathe, the ground we tread on, and the food we eat, taxed to main-

maintain a regular system of political corruption ; to support the administrators of our government, and their innumerable dependents, in the most enormous extravagance of pomp and luxury ? Why then should the poor alone be envied a trivial portion of that wealth, so profusely dissipated by ourselves, and so servilely resigned to the hands of those, to whom we have delegated authority for the benefit, not injury, of society ?

But the poor, it will be said, have their superfluities also ; and the tea table has, in particular, been inveighed against, as the box of Pandora, fraught with all the miseries they suffer : the consumption of money, the destruction of health, and the engrossment of time, have all been charged to the account of this unfortunate shrine of female devotion. Were the use of tea, however, totally prohibited, it is not by any means clear, that a less expensive or detrimental article could be adopted as its substitute ; or that the hours redeemed from its service, would be allotted to any employment less unprofitable. There must be some relaxation from labour ; the human machine cannot support perpetual motion ;

motion; and what relaxation can be found in every respect more inoffensive, than the enjoyment of this unintoxicating beverage*?

There is, indeed, a real and inexpressible fatal source of mischief, which nevertheless does not seem to have been censured with sufficient severity. This is the Circean bowl of inebriation: over this, the head of the family, he on whose industry principally depends its subsistence, leans rivetted to his seat, as by enchantment, for hours and days and nights together, contaminating others by his evil example, and lavishing in the present week, with the absurdity of a maniac, the wages procured in the past by the most strenuous exertion of his corporeal

* As little adapted as tea may seem to the purpose of medicine, its sedative and antiseptic qualities have probably contributed to diminish the frequent occurrence of inflammatory and putrid diseases; and as to the purpose of aliment, it cannot reasonably be thought, that the use of it has so universally obtained among so populous, so prudent, and intelligent a nation as the Chinese, without some knowledge or at least presumptive proofs of its utility. For a particular and judicious account of tea, see a treatise on the tea plant, by the ingenious Dr. Lettsom.

abilities;

abilities; regardless of the wants, and impenetrably deaf to the most importunate cries of his suffering, perhaps perishing wife and children*. The alehouse is indeed

* The situation of the unhappy progeny of those, dissolute abandoned parents is really pitiable. Except the children apply for assistance, they are no part of the care of the parish: infants are totally incapable of making application; and those of maturer age may suffer to extremity, before it can be effectually made. If, on examination, the parent be found capable of maintaining them, there is no means of constraining him to his duty, but by making distress of his goods, if he have any, or, in default thereof, imprisonment. In this case, the charge of supporting the children must devolve on the parish; it will, therefore, be deemed the wisest method to let affairs remain in *statu quo*, the parent pursuing his wonted course of ebriety and riot, the children pining in nakedness, filth, and hunger. I remember being present at a vestry, when a profligate father had the assurance to apply for assistance; at the same time it was known, that he really earned, by a peculiarly profitable branch of business, more than sufficient to have decently supported his children; notwithstanding which he suffered them to run naked into the highway, asking alms of every traveller. It was proposed to commit him to prison; but the motion was over-ruled, because the parish would then have been encumbered with the maintenance of his children.—

I re-

the infernal mansion, where the demons of avarice, extravagance, fury, and prophane-ness, hold their perpetual residence ; and whence the demons of famine and disease issue, like strong men armed, to desolate the cottages of the hamlet, or the streets of the city. In vain is there a power reposed in the magistrate, of removing in great measure a nuisance so flagrantly pernicious to the community, the eye of government winks at its continuance : licences must not be refused ; for though alehouses debauch the people, they increase the revenue, and assist to support the supercilious

I remember being disgusted at the sight of a young family naked at the door of a solitary cottage, in a country where employment is scarcely ever wanting for the industrious. — I remember the circumstance of a motherless infant, which, by the common consent of the neighbourhood, was allowed to be starved to death, by the neglect of a drunken father. These are not the ideal speculations of a book-maker, but real facts, which have come under my own personal cognizance. In all these cases, the want of a coercive power for compelling the parent to labour, and applying part of his earnings to the support of his offspring, is obvious. But as this was unattainable, it would surely have been no supererogatory exertion of duty in the parish, to have taken the offspring from the unnatural parent, and maintained them.

courtier

courtier who despises, and the brutal soldier who insults his freeborn fellow citizens *.

From

* Previous to licensing an alehouse, the law requires a certificate of the good fame and sober life and conversation of the person applying for the licence, signed either by the minister and major part of the churchwardens and overseers, or by three or four reputable substantial householders. Considering the character of many of these gentlemen publicans, it is no great wonder the latter alternative is commonly chosen: the reputable substantial householders may be brother tipplers, or gamesters, or poachers, or perhaps worse; there will not often be any hesitation or enquiry made about the matter. If the certifiers happen to be persons of somewhat higher rank, or better reputation, they will understand the words, good fame, and sober life and conversation, as mere expressions of form, or, at least, in so lax a sense, that if the party certified does not really keep, or propose to keep, an open bawdy house, they think they may safely certify him, and of course will not choose to displease a neighbour or customer, who requests a favour which costs them so little as the trouble of setting their names to a piece of paper. Is it not then evident, that no certificate should be valid, without the signature of the minister? The clergy, from their station, may be supposed independant; from their education, may be supposed to affix ideas to their words; from their situation, may be supposed acquainted with the character of their parishioners; and, from their

From a view of this dissipation and improvidence in the lowest rank of society, perhaps has proceeded the idea of those, who have proposed a repeal of the present laws, and the enactment of others by which the indigent, in the hour of calamity, would be left destitute of all aid, but from the uncompelled courtesy of their neighbours. The opinion of these appears to be founded on a number of erroneous principles : first, that the poor have, by law a claim to subsistence, which cannot by any means be defeated or evaded *. Secondly, that

their profession, may be supposed too conscientious to avouch a known falsity. The law does not require a certificate on renewal of the licence of an established alehouse keeper ; but it ought to do so ; since he, who enters on that profession with tolerable morals, may, in less than a year, become so corrupt, as not to be allowed to continue in it with propriety.

* One of the writers in the Spectator before quoted, who seems to have been no friend to the poor, adopts this erroneous principle of an indispensable obligation on parish officers to maintain every applier for a maintenance, and seems much offended at the laws, which he supposes have constituted this obligation. " For my own part," says he, " I cannot be mightily pleased
" with the laws, which have provided better to feed
" than

that reliance on such claim, renders them attentive only to the present, and careless to

“ than employ the poor; we have a tradition, that
 “ after the first of these laws was made, they were in-
 “ sulted with that famous song,”

“ Hang sorrow and cast away care,

“ The parish is bound to find us !.”

To draw any inference to the disadvantage of the poor from the sentiments of a ballad maker, is futile; and to represent the satire of the maintainer [which these verses undoubtedly are] as the insult of the maintained, is uncandid. The same author further observes,
 “ That if the industrious man shall submit to the
 “ hardest labour and the coarsest fare, rather than en-
 “ dure the shame of taking relief from the parish, or
 “ asking it in the street; this is the hungry, the
 “ thirsty, and the naked, I ought to relieve.” A charity that waits for meritorious objects of its exercise, is easily practised; such objects being, as the saying is, thinly sown. Besides, I do not understand what shame it is to those, who cannot help themselves to be helped by others. It is pride only that can fancy it a disgrace; and it surely cannot be right to bestow on pride the portion due to humility. But this pride is the friend of avarice, and therefore must be pleaded for. Another writer^b, in the abovementioned celebrated paper, is of very different sentiments; in his character of Eugenius, No. 177, he strongly recommends the

^b Addison.

to the future: thirdly, that there is an opportunity for all, a summer season, wherein, like the ant, they might accumulate the provision of the winter: and lastly, that if all expectation of legal assistance were precluded, the terrors of unaided poverty would happily operate to the advantage of those, who, with the conduct of idiocy or insanity, prodigally waste, in the prime of life, those earnings, which should have been reserved to supply the necessities of the decline.

The falsity of the first assertion has been already proved, where it was shewn, that the dispensation or denial of relief is absolutely at the option of the parish officer and the magistrate. The second is dependent on the first: if the poor know the invalidity of their claim, their reliance on it cannot be sufficiently strong to produce de-

practice of casual almsgiving.—“ I have known him,” says he, “ when he has been going to a play or an opera, divert the money designed for that purpose upon an object of charity, whom he has met with in the street, and afterwards pass his evening at a friend’s fire-side, with much greater satisfaction to himself, than he could have received from the most exquisite entertainments of the theatre.”

liberate

liberate wilful negligence, in a case of such importance. That all have the means of providing against the day of evil, "the time when," in the allegorical language of the oriental moralist, "the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men bow themselves," is a position equally controvertable, he who sustains and educates, with propriety, a numerous family on the weekly income of a few shillings, must be an œconomist indeed, to exact from the current demand, the smallest superfluity to answer the contingencies or certainties of a remote futurity. The influence of the present, where the power of divine grace has not subdued the unruly passions of corrupt nature, is often too powerful to be surmounted by the dread of distant punishment. It is not the fear of loathsome or excruciating disease, that will deter the sensualist or the epicure from the indulgences of their appetites. It is not the fear of an ignominious death, of which examples are continually before the eyes of the transgressor, that will deter the sons of rapine from the pursuit of their unlawful occupation: it is not the fear of the horrors of an invisible world, more terrible to
 imagi-

imagination as their nature is unknown, that will deter the sinner from the commission of wickedness. If then the apprehensions of positive punishment effect so little towards the reformation of the vicious, can it be reasonably supposed that the expectation of a mere negative retention of assistance in the time of necessity, should be able to vanquish the indolence of the naturally indolent, or the extravagance of the habitually extravagant.

During a period, wherein the price of provisions is exorbitant as at present, all schemes for reduction of expence to the public, without oppressing the pauper, appear absolutely impracticable: and the impropriety and cruelty of schemes for rendering, by making it intirely spontaneous, that provision more precarious, which is too much so already, must be evident to the slightest inspection of the eye of impartiality. Indeed, if disposition is to be discovered by sentiment, and future action, judged of by present disposition, were the proposers of such schemes able to remove the barrier of law, and establish a despotic self directed government over their dependent fellow-creatures, extending or refusing relief when and to

E

whom

whom they might think proper, it is much to be feared, that, like the infatuated tyrant of Judea, instead of making the heavy burdens of the people lighter and their yoke easier, they would cause their little finger to be found thicker than the loins of their predecessors; and that instead of chastising the poor with whips, they would torment them with scorpions*.

The

* Among these schemers for lessening expence, by rendering the support of the poor in a manner voluntary, is the celebrated author of the Farmer's letters; who digressively touches on this subject, and proposes that none should be entitled to relief, but on certificate of his merit from the minister and principals of the parish. His opinion cannot be better controverted, than in the words of the ingenious authors of the Monthly Review, whose strictures on this part of his performance, I shall take the liberty to transcribe.

“ We are afraid, if this proposal of granting relief
 “ only to those who should appear upon certificate to
 “ deserve it were adopted, many a poor wretch might
 “ be left to starve in the streets; for if the present view
 “ of the horrors of many a parish workhouse will not
 “ deter them from idleness and dissipation, nothing
 “ else probably ever will be able to do it; for these
 “ parochial prisons are in general under such mismanagement, as to render them a real terror to all who
 are

The only probable consequence of pursuing such mistaken policy, would be the increase of beggary and theft. As it is, the poor are but too often revenged on their oppressors, by making reprisals on their property: "my poverty, but not my will, consents," there is reason to believe is a salve for the wounded conscience of many a reluctant robber.

Other writers, either from attachment to what has received the sanction of antiquity, or from a persuasion that it would be difficult to establish any regulations more advantageous than the laws at present in existence, have proposed a continuance of

"are ever likely to become the miserable inhabitants
 "of them: and, as this dread is what prevents many
 "a poor creature from applying for admittance, few
 "parishes are disinterested enough to put them under
 "better regulation, and thereby increase the number
 "admitted, and of course the expence. This, however,
 "would probably not be the case of these proposed
 "hundred houses of industry, especially while
 "under the public inspection of men of property and
 "humanity, as trustees; and none else should be
 "vested with such an extensive power over even the
 "lowest of their fellow creatures, as the nature of such
 "establishments renders almost unavoidable."

them with some seemingly unimportant variations and additions. It is, however, uncontrovertibly evident, that, without very essential alterations, no reformation can possibly be accomplished. The very multiplicity of the statutes is, itself, an evil; the reduction of them, therefore, into one less liable to mistake or misinterpretation, is a measure first and indispensibly necessary. The principal point to be aimed at, should such alteration ever take place, is to counteract the force of interest, or divert its tide into new channels, adapt its agency to new purposes, and as it has hitherto operated to the disadvantage of the poor, cause it for the future to operate to their benefit.

For the management of a national concern like this of the poor, it is plain, that the whole system must be divided into a number of distinct though similar divisions. The parochial division has been tried: but the inequality of expence in different parishes, arising from the disproportion of extent to population, sufficiently demonstrates its impropriety for the purposes of taxation and maintenance*. Taxation, therefore, should

* This inequality is a grievance, whereof much complaint has been made, and not without reason.—

There

Should be no longer local and arbitrary, but general and uniform, limited like the land tax to a certain standard*, by which all possible advantage from parsimony, and consequently every inducement to oppression, being effectually obviated; it will be much less material in whom the

There is, indeed, a clause in the act, 43 Eliz. whereby either some adjacent parish, or the whole hundred, may be taxed in aid of the parish oppressed by the number of its paupers: but this method has seldom been practised; the poor have been permitted to suffer, because their managers were too indigent to maintain them, and too proud or too indolent to solicit assistance, from others. There is a strange power given by this clause to tax individuals in other parishes; this power may, indeed, be of use to reach some tyrannical gentleman, or overgrown farmer, whom his parishioners dare not assess to the extent of his occupation; but, at the same time, it may be abused into a fair opportunity for indulging a plausible revenge, where there is a secret animosity.

* Perhaps that of four or five shillings in the pound. —If it should be thought so high an assessment would be unnecessary in counties where provisions are cheap, and the maintenance of the poor will of consequence be less expensive, a lower one may be appointed for such situations.

administration of maintenance is reposed*. The direction of a trust composed of gentlemen, clergymen; and respectable tradesmen, has, however, been by some justly esteemed preferable to the direction of an ignorant vestry†. These have considered the hundred, or some other district of similar dimensions, as the most apposite division; and accordingly proposed, that, in every such district, such a trust should be established, wherein might be vested the several powers of assessing‡ the tax, and receiving

* It may be queried, if this assessment thus limited be more than sufficient to maintain the poor, what is to be done with the superfluity? If this should appear to be the case, let the assessment be lowered, or let the poor live better, the rich can afford it.

† The trustees might meet once in three months, or oftener, for the transaction of business; and, to secure a proper attendance at their meetings, a reasonable sum for expences might be allowed to those who attended, and a forfeiture to the same amount imposed on absentees, not incapacitated by sickness.

‡ It has been observed, that many are constrained to payment of parochial rates, who, in reality, need parochial assistance, as much as some whom they contribute to maintain; it might, therefore, be better, if all labourers

receiving and disbursing its produce, together with the appointment of all inferior officers *.

An objection has been urged, which impeaches in some degree the propriety of this arrangement, " that collective bodies

labourers with numerous families^c, whose weekly earnings amount not to more than seven or eight shillings on an average, were exempted from taxation; such exemption would naturally tend to the encouragement of industry, matrimony, and consequently population.

* The assessment should be as at present, according to the rate of occupation. To defeat the effects of interest, influence, or favour, the overseer of every parish [for it is not designed to abolish the office of overseer] should be obliged to deliver to the trustees, twice in the year, a written account of the annual occupation of all his parishioners, on penalty of a severe forfeiture. Wilful collusion, or misrepresentation in this point, should be punished with dismissal from the office.—Appeal against the assessment to be heard and finally decided at the first general quarter sessions for the county.—The proof of error or overcharge to rest on the appellant.—The produce of this assessment on the several parishes in the hundred, or district, to coalesce into one common stock for the use of such hundred or district.

* The number of the children necessary to such exemption, might be fixed, as in the case of the militia.

“ of men are generally found more severe
 “ and arbitrary in their conduct, than
 “ any of the individuals of which they are
 “ composed :” and it is to be feared there
 is too much truth in the assertion *.

Where private interest does not exist as a motive to severity, such severity may result from an erroneous opinion, that kindness of disposition, and weakness of intellect, are inseparably united: pride will rather support the imputation of vice, than that of folly; and consequently those, who in secret would obey the dictates of nature and conscience, will in company act contrary to inclination and conviction; every one being afraid to be directed by his feelings, lest his neighbours should form conclusions to the disadvantage of his judgment. Some also may esteem themselves obliged in justice to the public, as faithful stewards of its property, to be cautious to an extremum in the mode and measure of distribution, here, however, it should be considered that the exercise of

* This objection may be urged with far greater weight against the vestry, when to the fear of shame, and the notion of justice, the operation of interest is super-added.

virtue cannot be a rational cause of shame; and that the fidelity of a steward consists, not in unrequired parsimony, but prudent appropriation of the wealth committed to his management.

By the adoption of this plan of uniform taxation, all occasion for settlement, and all necessity of removal, must naturally cease. Settlement, that injury to parishes, that source of perpetual dispute and litigation, and removal, that injury to the poor, that wanton or malicious chase of the unhappy from one inhospitable region to another, will therefore, to the honour of our nation, be totally annihilated*.

No

* Dr. Burn, who seems fully sensible of the inconveniencies resulting from the present standard of settlements purposes to reduce them to that of the place of birth, or of the last twelve months residence; but these are by no means sufficiently simple, or exempt from objection.—It would be hard for a person, who had passed a long life at a distance from the place of his nativity, on the necessity of application for relief, to be returned thither, unknowing and unknown, to a set of people, who must detest him as an unexpected incumbrance.—It would be hard for a person, who had lived eleven months and twenty days in one parish, on such necessity to be returned to another, where by a
ten

No distinction of the different objects of relief will be requisite, but those of resident, and vagrant; and those only, on account of the manner wherein that relief is administered. Inhabitation for three years, or three months, or three days, as householder, diurnal labourer, or contracted servant,

ten years absence all his connexions were totally obliterated.—If there were any other standard of settlement than that proposed above, the most rational would be that of the place where a person had lived the longest; but the determination of that point would often cost much trouble and be to little purpose. Indeed, the present parochial disputes about settlement are, abstractedly considered, a contention about nothing, a mere gratification of obstinacy, and the lust of victory in the contenders. If one parish were to maintain an inhabitant, who was parishioner of another; the latter, or at least some neutral parish, must maintain a nonresident parishioner for the former, and the injury or benefit would be reciprocal. Or, in other words, if A was born, or had served an apprenticeship, or a year's servitude, at York, and were to remove to Norwich, become indigent, and be supported there; Norwich, in that case must consider, that they have either B at York, or C at Manchester, or D at Bristol; where then can possibly exist the injury? There is, perhaps, no parish in the nation, but from one cause or other has its emigrants.

will

will be equally valid for the creation of a parishioner—laws which exact service or money from the capable inhabitant, as in the case of the highways and militia, proceed on the same or a nearly similar principle, without producing any obvious disadvantage.

Here, perhaps, it may not be improper to admit a short digression; to take a view of the present standards of settlement, and examine what purposes they answer, and how far they are consonant to reason.

There seem only three principles, whereon settlement can be rationally founded: the positive interest of retaining, within the jurisdiction of a parish, the useful and unexpensive inhabitant; the negative interest of excluding the useless and expensive; and the equity of maintaining those by whom prior advantages have resulted to the maintainers, as an equivalent for their present or subsequent expence; for where a man has bestowed his labour, and spent his money, he undoubtedly ought to be supported, when the ability of labouring, and the ability of spending, terminate together.

As to the first intention the standard of birth absolutely disappoints it, as retaining only those who of necessity are chargeable;
for

for after seven years of age, a change of settlement may be effected. Nor are the standards of forty days residence, apprenticeship, and servitude greatly preferable : the able bodied industrious labourer, with a small family, will find no insuperable difficulty in commencing parishioner wherever he chooses ; while the infirm, the indolent, and the incumbered with children*, will inevitably be returned to the place from whence they came, before the required term of inhabitancy can be completed. The apprentice with the prime of life before him, and the servant in a state of celibacy, may any where be settled at the option of their parents or themselves with more certainty and facility.

* The forty days residence, which at first sight promises an easy mode of settlement to such, is, by the publication of notice and power of removal, converted into a mere tantalizing inanity, an ignis fatuus, which holds up its light, and disappears in a moment. It is in fact, a shew of liberty, but a real imprisonment ; nothing more than a licence for parish officers to keep such inhabitants as they like, and reject such as incur their disapprobation : accordingly we find few settlements effected, or even attempted, on this plan.

As

As to the second intention, the intention of rejection, the standard of birth is too confined to be of any considerable importance; since it rejects only those children, whose parents are not parishioners, but inhabitants with known settlements: for children whose parents are both inhabitants and parishioners, children whose parents settlements cannot be discovered and illegitimate children, are all settled wherever they are born. The standard of forty days residence will, indeed, answer this purpose, because instantaneous removal may take place*; but the standards of apprenticeship

* It seems to have been intended for this very purpose, as the act of parliament itself expresses:—
 “Whereas, by reason of some defects in the law,
 “poor people are not restrained from going from one
 “parish to another, and therefore endeavour to settle
 “themselves in those parishes where there is the best
 “stock, the largest commons or wastes to build cottages, and the most woods to burn and destroy, and
 “when they have consumed it, then to another parish,
 “and at last become rogues and vagabonds.” What-
 ever might be the case when this statute was made, did no such restraint now exist, there is no reason to think that there would exist any such systematical migration of paupers,—Besides, the inconvenience even then must
 have

apprenticeship and servitude will not, for the apprentice and servant are by law unremovable.

On the third principle, the standard of birth would be unexceptionable, provided the place of nativity were always the place of habitation: but he, who quits this natural settlement at seven years of age, or even at fourteen, and returns in the decline of life impotent and distressed, has certainly no more equitable title to relief than a stranger. The standards of forty days residence, as householder, apprentice, or servant, in this view are equally absurd: in an apprenticeship, or servitude, a person might be supposed to contribute something to the advantage of a parish; but in forty days temporary sojournment, or forty days fag end of such apprenticeship or servitude, the supposition that any thing meriting

have been local; for, in London, and many other places, there were no "woods to burn and destroy." The law was probably the offspring of some scheming senator, who scrupled not to establish universal oppression to prevent particular injury, and whose proposal accordingly met with a ready approbation; for the hand of avarice has always been busy in constructing yokes for the neck of poverty.

notice

notice as a valuable consideration for future maintenance could be contributed, were sufficiently ridiculous. Such are our standards of settlement! and can the laws by which they are established be justly said to constitute any regular or intelligible system of action *? Are they not rather, an ill-connected train of occasional expedients, successively adopted; the latter to rectify the errors, or supply the defects of the former; an unwieldy fabric of heterogeneous designs, erected by the "line of confusion with the stones of emptiness."

It may be objected to the preceding plan of immediate settlement by inhabitation, that "were all certain of a maintenance wherever they came, all would resort to where the best work and the best wages could be procured, and so leave desolate the more remote and unfertile parts of the nation †." But this seems a mistake—there

* For proof that they do not, let the reader recur to Burn's Justice, where he will find orders of justices reversed by the quarter sessions and confirmed by the court of King's bench; and others confirmed by the sessions, and reversed by the court.

† It may be further objected, that were this plan to take place, frauds^d would be continually practiced in

^d Vide Burn's History of the Poor Laws, p. 235.

shifting

there are, indeed, some who are impatient of rest in every situation; these wander now, and would continue to wander, were ten times more difficulties and distresses the consequence of their excursions: but many, on the contrary, have an invincible attachment to the place of their nativity; and many are habitually fond of their own particular occupations, and the connexions of the fraternity, and the emulation of competitors for excellence, are co-operating inducements to detain them, where those occupations are most generally and advantageously practiced: there cannot, therefore, be any danger of a destruction of the equilibrium of population, by a defection of inhabitants from one county to another. There is, indeed at present, a very detrimental conflux of people from the provinces to the metropolis; where the morals,

shifting off indolent and useless people from one hundred to another; but it is to be hoped, that those in whose hands the management will be reposed, will have honor and virtue superior to such illicit proceedings: and as to voluntary peregrination of the poor, in search of the best maintenance and the mildest government, it will be unnecessary, when liberality and lenity are every where equal.

health,

health, and lives of thousands, are annually offered spontaneous victims at the altars of folly, avarice, and ambition: could an eligible means of repressing this conflux be discovered, the discovery would be a most important and desirable acquisition.

The parochial division for the purposes of separate taxation and separate maintenance, has been considered and rejected as improper — For the purpose of management, it may, perhaps, be retained with propriety, and consequently the establishment of an office in every parish somewhat similar to that of overseer, will be necessary. The officers should be the immediate servants of the trustees, dismissable at pleasure: they should be persons of leisure sufficient to transact the business of their department with propriety; of discretion sufficient to act in all the variety of cases that may come under their cognizance; and of disposition, as far as disposition can be ascertained, liberal and benevolent.

There are, perhaps, no two circumstances wherein a greater disparity is visible, than in the execution of those offices which are inevitably imposed, and of those which are voluntarily chosen; those where trouble is aggravated by expence, and those where

it is repaid by pecuniary advantage: the negligence in one case, and the diligence in the other, are equally conspicuous*. Philosophers talk of patriotism, and public virtue; and from the ideas of these, may have originated the custom of forcing people upon the performance of duties without recompence: but speculation and reality, theory and practice, are frequently at variance—such officers undertake their business with reluctance; and, if they are not honest beyond the common character of the age, will be sure to find some means or other for self-payment—a salary, therefore, should be allotted to every overseer, proportioned to the peculiar circumstances of his situation, and the extent of his jurisdiction.

The means of maintenance, and proper persons to administer them, have been pointed out: the mode of administration only remains to be considered.

Much has been said in favour of some one uniform method of supporting the

* For instance the officers appointed by government for acquisition on security of its revenues.

* Sir Richard Lloyd's scheme is of this mixed nature. Vide Burn's History, pag. 195.

poor; and that of hundred houses proposed about twenty years since by Mr. Alcock, has had many recommenders, and in some places been actually adopted. But there are objections which militate, with energy, against its universal and indiscriminate adoption. For a body composed of various characters, a provision equally various will be necessary.

For the aged and infirm who have settled habitations, relief at those habitations by payment of their rent a weekly allowance to procure them food, and an annual supply of decent cloathing, will undoubtedly be most proper. For other indigent householders in case of accident and sudden sickness*, relief at home will likewise be most

* As a delay of assistance must, in these and some other circumstances, prove as injurious as a total refusal, in case of denial or demur on the part of the overseer, any two trustees should be impowered, on complaint of the pauper, to order such relief as may to them appear necessary, till the next general meeting, when the affair may be further investigated. There are other temporary distresses besides those arising from disease or accident, which ought to come under the cognizance of the public in order for relief.—In severe frost, the business of the

most eligible; and where the family is numerous, and the disease communicable by infection, the precaution of an early separation by removal of the uninfected to a temporary residence, will be beneficial to the sufferers in preventing the aggravation of malignity, and to the public in preventing expences which avarice depending on chance frequently incurs by its own negligence.

It may be said, that "supplying the poor with money, will only be supplying them with the means of intemperance;" but no superfluity of allowance sufficient to admit of such abuse, is intended, and he who is both hungry and thirsty, will scarcely expend what should procure him both meat and drink in drink only.—To prevent a misapplication in this respect, where the prevalence of temptation is expected, some might propose the contracting with tradesmen to provide with neces-

bricklayer, the shoemaker, the gardener, and those who are employed on the water, is at a period—Severe frost, it is true, is seldom in this climate of long continuance; but while it does continue, the sufferers from it should receive pecuniary assistance.

faries

series a certain number of families; but here, the mortifying consideration of the general depravity of human nature, will again occur: the love of money, that root of evil, whose poisonous sap is diffused through every branch of society, will be sure to exert its mischievous influence; bad provision, the refuse of the shambles and the granary, will be dispensed to those, who dare not reject what they do not pay for.

The characters of age and youth are, in many respects, dissimilar, particularly in the slight regard paid by the latter, to their place of residence? where ever they are situated, they soon become satisfied with their situation. To youth, therefore, a proper method of confinement will be no injury, but rather an inexpressible benefit, since to the want of such confinement, must be attributed that adscititious wickedness, so observable in many who are too young to be apprized of its criminality. The force of education is universally acknowledged: the tender mind insensibly assimilates to the minds of its companions, and the manners are preserved decent, or

vitiated, merely by example. The pupil of a pious family will fear a lie, and tremble at an oath; the scholar of an ale-house be accomplished in deceit and profaneness.

If virtue then be preferable to vice, and proper tuition be a means of promoting virtue, duty, no less than humanity, calls loudly for some care of poor orphaned, deserted, and neglected children, who are now left at large to learn laziness, which will render them a burden, and mischief which will render them a pest to society. For the reception, therefore, of this class of indigents, the proposed hundred houses may probably be adopted to considerable advantage.

In whatever view the preservation of life may appear to the ignorant and unthoughtful, to the intelligent and considerate it will ever appear of the utmost importance; and in all establishments of this kind ought to be the primary object of attention. In the construction of these houses grandeur or elegance were absurdity: the *simplex munditiis* is sufficient; but salubrity of air and soil, and extent of capacity, are articles absolutely indispensable

possible^e; and no other precaution that may tend to prevent the spontaneous production

• In structures erected for the use of public charities, the hollow quadrangle has been frequently adopted, as a form preferable to all others; and as frequently and justly censured, as proving incompatible with health, by producing a stagnant and impure atmosphere: and, indeed, where the surrounding buildings are lofty, and the surrounded area small, this inconvenience will be felt in its utmost severity. But an oblong quadrangle or double L, the sides composed of a number of low cottages, (as proposed by Dr. Burn^e) the upper end consisting of the manager's house, a school, a chapel, and rooms for manufactories, and the lower end inclosed with an open palisade only^f, may have its advantages without liability to the abovementioned objection. These cottages should be separated, either by party walls of brick, or by small vacant intervals. The upper rooms should be ventilated by means of windows placed opposite to each other, a circumstance more essential to the salubrity of all lodging places, than is commonly apprehended. In every cottage should be placed a family composed of five or six children, under the care of one matron. Such widows as are admitted residents, should have the care of their own offspring;

^e Vide History of Poor Laws, page 233.

^f The idea of a prison, enclosed all round with dead walls, is disgusting and in this case unnecessary.

duction of disease, should be neglected: but notwithstanding all precaution, diseases must sometimes be produced; and in different cases a different management will be found necessary. Distempers, to whose attacks the patient is only once obnoxious, are generally less injurious to children than to adults; no measures, therefore, need be taken for their extirpation: to retard the the rapidity of their progress, so far as to obviate the effects of vitiated air or accumulated putrefaction, will be all that is requisite*. A conduct totally opposite, must be pursued respecting distempers

and other single women, dependant on the public for their subsistence, should be appointed nurses to the orphans.—Hours of work, learning, refreshment, and relaxation, should be fixed and adhered to without deviation. Active labour performed abroad will be most consistent with the health of the young agents; and where sedentary business under cover is chosen, the workshop should be spacious and airy, and the number of the employed restricted according to its dimensions.

* In respect to the small pox, inoculation affords a happy exemption from danger; that beneficial practice should, therefore, always be adopted by way of prevention,

which,

which, like the former, are acquired by contagion, but may nevertheless recur at various periods of life *, so that the unhappy subject obtains no future security from his present sufferings: in this circumstance, the fruit if possible, should be nipped in the very bud, the spark extinguished at its very first appearance †.

But the preservation of health is of not more importance, than the preservation of morals. Sobriety, therefore in the governors and attendants of these houses (notwithstanding a proper scrupulosity in that respect will too often render the choice perplexing) is a qualification never be dispensed with: and any of the elder

* The petechial and other contagious fevers, and the ulcerated sore throat. The former may often be prevented by a proper regard to cleanliness and purity of air; the latter, depending more upon the temperature of the weather, and being particularly incident to children, may frequently make its appearance.

† For this purpose a separate house should be appropriated, as a little lazaretto, adjacent to, but not within the enclosure; and thither the patient should be immediately removed, and placed under the care of a judicious medical practitioner, engaged to attend as occasion might require.

youth,

youth who may prove incorrigibly refractory, must be transferred to a situation, where the influence of their example cannot be injurious to others*. For the same reason, frequent excursions from the house must not be permitted: youth are apt to imitate; and it is next to impossible to pass the streets of any populous town, without hearing language and viewing behaviour, very improper for imitation. Some, perhaps, may ask, "to what purpose is all this extraordinary attention to education? what will it avail? your pupils must be dismissed to the stage of the world: a stage, where vice reigns triumphant, and is ready in arms to reduce them under her dominion." He, however, who is fortified with the armour of good principles and good habits, may perhaps endure the conflict, and escape the yoke which must otherwise be embraced without resistance.

By a regular and resolute persistence in the methods that have been recommended, the number of vagrant poor would proba-

* The house of confinement hereafter to be mentioned.

bly soon be diminished : nevertheless a provision for these unhappy itinerant indigents, requires immediate attention ; and that of hundred houses may, perhaps, in this case also justly claim the preference.

This class of paupers seems properly reducible into two capital divisions, the inoffensive and offensive ; the former whereof will admit of further distinction into different species.

Amongst these may be ranked all, who are absolutely disabled in body, or deficient in understanding ; with those whose partial imbecility of intellects, or natural awkwardness, prevents their ever attaining to dexterity in their various occupations. These have seldom any settled habitations, but wander through the country from master to master, the first who are discharged and the last who are taken ; sometimes employed at wages inadequate to their subsistence, and often not employed at all. These are mostly of shamefaced address, and pusillanimous disposition, they cannot intrude themselves into business, or exact alms with noise and impudence, but stand trembling at a door or in a corner,
and

and implore assistance only with looks of disconsolation *

There are others born to better prospects, who reduced to indigence, by extravagance or misfortune would willingly apply themselves to labour; but find it difficult in age to learn lessons, to which their youth has been a stranger. Nor would such obtain employment, even at the price of bread; it will not answer the purpose of artificers and manufacturers, to have their work and their commodities spoiled by bunglers; and even in the servants of farmers, skill is a qualification not less requisite than diligence.

All these would undoubtedly accept with thankfulness a residence, more temporary or permanent as the nature of their cases might require in a house of relief purposely provided for their reception.

In most proposals for establishments of this kind, the erection of manufactories has been a principal object of considera-

* When such do venture to apply for assistance, they tell their story in so imperfect a manner, that the timidity and hesitation of weakness is mistaken for the confusion of guilt, and the falterings of imposition.

tion,

tion, and that with the double view of diminishing expence, and providing employment for those whom want of employment only reduces to want of necessities. But the success of such schemes in a lucrative view, is rather problematical; since those who are bred to one profession, will rarely be of any great utility in another*: and as for the few happy geniuses

* As to the women, the case is different: there are few females who cannot either knit, or spin, or use their needles. For weavers or taylors also work may be provided in their own professions; the latter, at least, may furnish themselves and their fellow paupers, with cloathing. But husbandmen, of whom perhaps a third part of the objects under consideration are composed, will be of no use in sedentary occupations. Most of these, however, have been used to digging, and some might be employed in the cultivation of vegetables, in a piece of ground appropriated to that purpose. And hence the orphan house, the house in question, and house of confinement, hereafter to be mentioned, may be supplied with that kind of provision. Beating of hemp, it may be said, can be performed by every one who can lift a beetle; but the ignominious character of those to whom that occupation is usually assigned, will justly render it disgusting to others; it should, therefore, be adopted in the house of confinement only.

As

geniuses, to whom nothing is a difficulty, who can turn as the saying is their hands to every thing, till by age or disease incapacitated for business, they will not be likely to require assistance; and then an

As these houses are not designed as lurking holes for laziness, all capable of labour, who cannot be employed therein with propriety, on the first favourable vicissitude of weather, or certainty of their obtaining employment, should be discharged and supplied with a printed testimonial of their good behaviour, specifying the time of their dismissal; on producing whereof they should, in any subsequent case of necessity, be received without hesitation into the same, or any other house of relief. in any district wherein they may become necessitous.—The keeping registers, and printing annual lists of all persons entertained and dismissed, and distributing copies of such lists to the trustees of every hundred, the governors of every house of relief, and the overseers of every parish in the nation, would perhaps be the most effectual means of preventing imposition.—Those whose conduct in the house of relief may demonstrate that their continuance therein is improper, should be removed into the house of confinement.

Such as choose to see what has been said on the subject of erecting manufactories, are referred to Dr. Burn's History of the Poor Laws, where several schemes of that kind are collected.

evening

evening of repose after a day of labour, ought to be their portion.

There is a number of indigent sojourners of a still different character; these are industrious labourers, who have families and habitations but nevertheless make the regular progress from county to county with the hay time and harvest; and detained by sickness, and other unexpected disasters, are frequently unable to reach the place of their destination, till the season of employment is over. For these, and other inoffensive travellers, it has been proposed with humanity that does honour to the proposer*, to erect adjoining to every house of relief an apartment like the oriental caravanseras, open to all comers, who should there be entitled to lodging and maintenance for one night only, cases of uncommon or dangerous inclemency of weather excepted, when the entertainment should be of equal duration*.

Only

* Mr. Alcock.

* At quitting any one of these inns, the traveller should be supplied with money to support him to the next.—In case this scheme were adopted, the laws against paltry lodging houses, those nests of thieves, prostitutes,

Only one class of vagrants that of habitual beggars now remains unnoticed; these are either impostors really robust and healthy, but assuming the appearance of sickness and decrepitude; or actual sufferers from disease or accident, who notwithstanding are of sufficient ability to procure a subsistence by their own industry, but choose to make their sufferings a plea for obtaining it from the benevolence of others: the maxim of all these is liberty and indolence; restraint and labor*, in a prison, where the prevention of egress is

prostitutes and beggars, might be severely put in execution with propriety. Such houses are both a nuisance to particular neighbourhoods, and an injury to society in general: inoffensive characters being necessitated to sojourn at them in company with vicious ones become corrupted by their example.

* Of all the unworthy itinerants, who crave alms, none perhaps are a greater pest to the community, than the race commonly denominated gipsies; a race, who lodge in barns, dine under hedges, pilfer from villages; and menace vengeance to farmers and others, who refuse them entertainment.—These certainly ought to be deprived of that liberty, which they make so bad a use of, and rendered serviceable to the interests of those they have injured and insulted.

rendered

rendered as much as possible compatible with the preservation of health, will therefore be their properest allotment *. For these unworthy members of society, though by the profligacy of their conduct they have justly forfeited their freedom, no decent accommodation should be wanting †; neither should they be subjected to any oppressive or injurious treatment: in the midst of judgment we must remember mercy, and consider they are our brethren. For this reason, those barbarous flagellations appointed by our present laws ought to be abolished ‡: they are equally inconsistent

* With this view, a number of rooms might be dispersed over an extensive area, and surrounded with walls of that height and structure, as to preclude all hope of escape in the most artful or adventurous.

† Dr. Burn justly remarks on the impropriety of those schemes of provision for the poor, which propose a separation of the sexes, constituting a *populus virorum*, and a *populus muliarum*; and therefore, even in this proposed house of confinement, the married should be permitted to reside together.

‡ If news-paper intelligence may be depended on, these inhuman penalties are too often inflicted; as one instance hereof, the following is transcribed from the Public Ledger of Dec. 26, 1772. " In a country,

G

wherein

silent with reason and humanity; they
degrade the man to the brute*, and only
serve

wherein it has been declared in the first court of
justice, that slavery is unknown, and that the owner
of a negro has no power to compel his slave to re-
turn to America, without the latter's consent, we
meet with the following punishment inflicted on a
poor fellow for leaving his wife and children charge-
able to a parish, (or rather to speak more properly
in these hard times, for not staying to starve with
them or rot in a goal.) It is copied from the Can-
terbury Journal of Dec. 22, 1772, and is as follows.
“On Tuesday last, William Dodd was committed to
St. Dunstan's goal, Canterbury, for running away,
and leaving his family chargeable to the parish of
Willesborough, and ordered to be kept to hard la-
bour for one month, and to be whipt once a week
till his back is bloody. On Thursday he received
his first whipping; will be whipt again on Thursday
24th, Thursday 31st, and on the last day of his
confinement.”—The author of this essay is far
from thinking a proper power over the poor unnecessary;
he well knows many of them are ungrateful and re-
fractory; and, if there were no compulsoy laws, the
number of such might increase: but he would have the
power reposed in better hands than it is at present, and
if possible never abused.

* The abuse of animals ought to be restrained by
some severe penalty: the cruelties inflicted on them, in

serve to obliterate the sense of shame; to awaken the diabolical passions of wrath and revenge in the punished, and extinguish all compassion in the bosom of the punisher: where simple confinement will not subdue turbulence of disposition, the fasting room of Mr. Fielding will be a much more eligible, and probably successful expedient.

The adoption of another part of Mr. Alcock's plan; that relative to infirmaries seems absolutely necessary*, one of these should

rage or wantonness, by those common tormentors, hackney coachmen, carmen and butchers, are intolerably offensive to the compassionate part of mankind, who, if they presume to intercede in behalf of the poor suffering brutes, are sure to be insulted by those worse than brutal brethren of the horsewhip and bludgeon.

* In the construction of these infirmaries, the principal point attended to, must be the guarding against the stagnation or communication of putrid effluvia. This purpose will perhaps be best accomplished, by a building composed of a range of rooms, with doors immediately opening on an area in the external air, or at most secured from the perpendicular descent of moisture by a light projection. By this structure, all impurities exhaling from the sick, instead of circulating from room to room, or lingering in close courts or crowded gal-

should be situated adjacent to every house of relief and confinement, for the reception of such residents in either as may be attacked with any sudden sickness capable of conveying infection to others: and likewise for that of vagrants or travellers in a similar situation.

The management of the several houses before mentioned, viz. the orphan house, the

series, will by the current of air be instantaneously dispersed: the ceilings of these rooms should be much loftier than those in common use; and if some of them were uncieled in the manner of a barn, the escape of the vitiated air, through the numerous interstices between the tiling will be an additional advantage, and such rooms will be sufficiently warm for summer. The erroneous practice of sending the unfortunate sick to be destroyed in the crowded hospitals of crowded cities, has been judiciously censured in an ingenious pamphlet published last year, intitled *Thoughts on Hospitals*: but spite of all information and all remonstrances, the structure and œconomy of our hospitals remain unimproved; and *Newgate, that inexhaustible fund of artificial disease, continues to diffuse its poisonous exhalations among the people.*—There is a charitable foundation* lately established on a plan much preferable to that of our hospitals, viz. for visiting the sick poor at their own houses, and supplying them with medicines.

* The Dispensary in Aldersgate-street.

house of relief for adults, and the house of confinement for habitual beggars, and sturdy vagabonds, with their several infirmaries, must be vested in the trustees. By them the respective governors must be appointed; and to them, the said governors together with the parochial overseers, must account quarterly for all sums received and expended.

The apprehension of vagrants on the present plan, is an act of absurdity and cruelty; since they can only be consigned to a temporary confinement in bridewell, to be dismissed thence improved proficient in villainy; or be passed to what is called their own settlement, to be starved or poisoned in a farmed workhouse; or at best, returned to a precarious dependence on voluntary charity. On the proposed plan, such apprehension will be an act of real kindness, all objections to which must vanish on consideration of its beneficial consequences. After a proper discrimination of the different characters of the apprehended, different places of abode will be ready for their reception: the truly distressed cannot be injured by admission to a hospitable mansion, where every happiness

consistent with the station of a pauper, awaits their acceptance ; and from such a situation, none but the incorrigibly indolent, restless, and imposing, would attempt or wish to escape ; and those, after repeated trials, should be deemed habitual beggars, who are incapable of rightly directing their own conduct, or judging of their own welfare, and consequently cannot be injured by condemnation to perpetual imprisonment and perpetual labour*.

The

* By our present laws, rewards are appointed for the apprehension of vagrants ; but few persons choose to meddle beside their own business, and by so meddling obtain the opprobrious appellation of informer^h. Such apprehension, therefore, had better be made more immediately the business of the overseer, to whom a premium should be assigned for every person committed to any of the houses : he should likewise be liable to a forfeiture, on conviction of wilfully neglecting to relieve distress, or conniving at imposition. In cases of sickness, or other evident necessity, he must transmit the party immediately to the infirmary, or house of relief ; and in cases of more doubtful nature, where fraud

^h An appellation, which, whatever idea may be affixed to it by the vulgar, will, in the present case, reflect dishonour on no man.

may

The very idea of a total prohibition of change of place to the lower order of people, must appear ridiculous to all, who have considered the nature of man and of society. This change, however, as a circumstance continually productive of imposition, certainly requires regulation. Among the variety of causes to which the

may be suspected, he must apply to the two next adjacent trustees for directions: for, without examination before two or more trustees, none should be committed to the house of confinement.

To this plan of perpetual imprisonment, may be objected the difficulty of governing such a number of immoral characters, as will be collected together; and the danger of the confined becoming too numerous for the means provided for their subsistence. But experience shews, that discipline may be preserved among such characters; and what is effected in one place, may surely be effected in another; by a gentle treatment of the more docile, a party will always be secured to manage the refractory; and the punishment is too well adapted to the crime, to admit of the prison being crouded with able-bodied prisoners.

As by the present highway and vagrant acts, every man is in effect constituted a constable in certain cases; so every trustee, whether in the commission for the peace or not, should, in all matters relative to the poor, be constituted a justice.

prevalence of the profession of vagrancy must be attributed, one perhaps of the most considerable, is the perpetual vicissitude in the state of our military establishments*: a number of persons are suddenly taken from one course of life, and introduced into another totally dissimilar. From this they are dismissed by long disuse un-

* How far the establishment of a national militia may have contributed to secure the nation from the attempts of foreign enemies, I leave to politicians to determine: but very certain I am, it has contributed to extend the dominion of two intestine ones, infinitely more dangerous to the state, than all the Frenchmen and Spaniards in Europe; I mean indolence and immorality. Many a comparatively innocent character, has made a speedy transition from the plough tail, through the battalion, to the gallows.—The month's relaxation from labour, and residence in quarters, is more detrimental to youth, than a superficial observer of things might imagine: habits of idleness, swearing, gaming, and drunkenness, are easily acquired by example: and, when once acquired, are seldom or never resigned.—It were, indeed, well, if all who suffer contamination of morals from this scheme of expensive parade, were of the lower order of society.—It is to be feared many sober gentlemen, who have figured as militia officers, have obtained their military rank at the price of their virtue.

qualified

qualified for labour, and unprovided with employment; to point out the consequence would be superfluous. The remedy is obvious, all that have families in any place, however remote from the place of their discharge, should be directly transmitted thither, and supplied with cash for their present maintenance at the expence of government. Those who have not families, might be released from their military duties, but retained in the service, and employed (at least for a time) in works of public utility *. The roads of our nation are its standing opprobrium, the complaint and the jest of foreigners. The few, which under the direction of turnpikes, are justly exempted from this general censure or ridicule, only serve to facilitate the conveyance of provision to the capital, to the disadvantage of the country; while the intercourse between town and town, is impeded by rocks and quagmires, little less than

* It may be urged, that this employment of the soldiery would interfere with the employment of other laborious poor; but by all, who, when discharged, return to labour, these are injured already; and for the others, some adventitious occupations might surely be discovered.

impassable

impassable. The military of France are said to be employed in the construction and repair of the public highways of that kingdom; and it were perhaps difficult to assign a satisfactory reason, why the military of England should not be employed in the same manner.

There is another set of people, whose profession seems to have a pretty close affinity with that of vagrant mendicancy. These are the itinerant merchants, commonly called hawkers and pedlars, the dealers in buttons and buckles, and venders of brooms and matches. Did these never deviate from their avowed occupation, or use it as a cover for secret injurious practices, it were perhaps liable to little objection. They pervade the most remote and sequestered recesses of the country: and by some it may be questioned, whether they are a greater disadvantage, or advantage to the community; whether the cheating a few ignorant rustics in the purchase of a few unnecessary trinkets and baubles, be not more than counter balanced by supplying families with necessaries, in the commerce for which there is less room
for

for imposition, and which in such situations might not otherwise be so conveniently obtained: but there is perhaps scarce any family so situated, but may procure from a market town every necessary at a lower price, and of better quality, than from these wandering retailers: yet as this is a fact, of the truth thereof people will not be easily convinced, they are certainly detrimental to the trading inhabitant. But this is not all: it is to be feared they assume different characters as opportunity offers, and exchange their mercantile traffick for beggary or theft, and sometimes behave with abandoned profligacy and consummate impudence. Nevertheless, there are among them some unquestionably honest and commendably industrious; who being accustomed to that peregrinatory mode of living, might with difficulty procure a subsistence in any other, and it were pity that these should suffer for the misconduct of their brethren: all, therefore, who travel in this manner, should be obliged to bring with them from parish to parish, besides their usual licence, certificates specifying the term of their tarrying, and the manner

manner of their behaviour, in their last place of sojournment *.

All persons within the probability of being constrained to ask charity, travelling from county to county on lawful occasions, should be provided with passes limiting the duration of their journey, like those in use at present; but, in other respects, better calculated to prevent deception, by describing minutely every particular of the dress, feature, and complexion of the bearer †.

In what has hitherto been said respecting these proposed regulations, the view has been confined to the country: the plan however, might be carried into execution, with equal facility, in London. The city and suburbs might be divided into several districts, blending as much as possible the great and small, rich and poor parishes, together. A number of trustees might be appointed in each district, and a number

* A form of such certificates should be printed, and copies lodged in the hands of every overseer, to be filled up and signed, as occasion may offer.

† Such passes should be granted, signed, and prolonged by the trustees, as by the justices at present.

of

of the different kinds of houses erected in different parts of the environs.

It will probably now become matter of enquiry, by what means the expence of so extensive a scheme can possibly be defrayed; perhaps the proposed assessment, at least after the establishment of the houses is accomplished may be nearly adequate to its defrayment; and, if the legislature, at any future period, should deem these, or any proposals of a similar nature, deserving of their notice; they, who so liberally raise money on every occasion for the good of their country, will not surely, in this particular article only be penurious, but, at the same time they vouchsafe us salutary laws, will vouchsafe us supplies for effectually carrying them into execution. If, however, any very sanguine expectations of aid from this quarter should not be indulged, it is possible other resources may in time be discovered. On the preceding plan, the charitable rich will have an opportunity of indulging their present or posthumous liberality; of bestowing their gifts, or bequeathing their legacies, without the fear of a misapplication; such benefactions cannot produce a saving of expence to

to the parish, for the parish must inevitably furnish its quota; nor can they replenish the pockets of parish officers, for parish officers must account to a tribunal, too numerous and respectable to admit a suspicion of mal-administration.

Considering the innumerable laws now existing, for the various purposes of government, trade, and civil police; there is certainly just reason of complaint, that the public are so little apprized of their existence: whenever a crime has been committed, or an inconvenience perceived, an act of parliament has been immediately provided by way of prevention, or remedy; but little care has been taken to extend the knowledge of its regulations, or its penalties. There are obsolete unrepealed statutes, process whereon would startle many a practising attorney: there are statutes of later date relative to particular occupations, wherewith the rest of the people are no more acquainted than with the laws of China or Japan: so that to the eyes of every person conversant in affairs of this nature, English ground appears covered with snares to entangle the feet of the ignorant and unwary. It is, therefore,
equally

equally necessary and reasonable whenever a new law may be enacted, particularly in a case of such importance as the care of the poor, that the statute should, at its first publication, and afterwards once a year, be read at the close of the service in every parish church, and during the market time in every market place of every town in the kingdom.

There accrues a pleasure to some minds from contemplating the ideas of possible perfection, universal benevolence, and regularity; and the perusal of the foregoing scheme may perhaps communicate to such minds a degree of that pleasure; but the supposition that, however amplified or improved, it would answer in every respect the end proposed, could only exist among the reveries of a visionary recluse, unacquainted with the affairs of mankind, and the imperfect manner wherein systems of policy, devised by the utmost exertions of human wisdom, have operated when reduced to practice. If, however, where evil so flagrantly abounds, its abundance can by any means be diminished, a point of no small importance is gained: if every
difficulty

difficulty cannot be surmounted, and every grievance redressed, it is surely better to take some steps towards probable amendment, than to rest indolently in what is universally confessed the worst of situations.

So far, indeed, is the author of this essay from the vanity of wishing to obtain the character of even a successful projector, and so strong is his sense of the lamentable depravity of mankind; that, although he has, to the utmost of his ability, endeavoured to guard against a perversion of his plan, every proposition which he has made, has been made with diffidence and fear, lest he should injure the clients whose cause he undertakes to plead; lest what he prescribes as remedies, should, in the hands appointed to administer them, be converted into poison. Conscious, therefore as he is of the difficulty of making any alteration for the better; no motive but a forcible conviction of the present miserable state of many of the poor, could have induced him to recommend any alteration at all. If what he has advanced, should receive the sanction of the public opinion

opinion as to its propriety ; and no objection be made but to its impracticability* ; if it should be only thought that he has drawn too largely on the time, attention, and property of his countrymen in their legislative capacity, he is ready to make abatement, and accept of a composition : let but the constrictive clause of the 9th of George I. be repealed, let but the iniquitous practice of farming work-houses be prohibited, and salaries allowed to the overseers ; and he refers the rest to the humanity of individuals.

Among those, whose fortune and influence enable them above others, to serve their fellow creatures, there are some possessing sensibility of mind, and liberality of sentiment ; men taught by education and reflection, to despise avarice as the meanest of passions ; men, who can separate the ideas of œconomy and rapacity ; and, to these the care of the poor is strenuously recommended.—To these, it is proposed, if government will not interfere

* Its impracticability, however, cannot be pleaded ; since many other schemes, fraught with equal difficulties have been adopted and proved successful.

in the affair, to adopt such parts of the foregoing scheme as may appear absolutely necessary*. By voluntary subscriptions, in many cases, much has been, and much may be, effected; and, perhaps, there is no one case, wherein voluntary subscriptions could be applied with more propriety and advantage, than in the case in question.—To these it is proposed, to superintend and regulate, as opportunity might offer, the management of the vestry: it could not possibly be any degradation of character to the gentleman, or the clergyman †, to take cognizance of the

* In particular, those relating to the relief of vagrants.

† Parochial tyranny is carried to the greatest pitch in large cities, and in small and solitary villages; the populousness and hurry of the one, and the solitude of the other, are peculiarly propitious to its existence. In market towns, and their environs, the conduct of parish officers is more obnoxious to observation and reprehension. Were the proprietors of estates to reside more frequently in the country, they might do much service to society, not only in the assistance of the poor, but in the reformation of manners, by putting the laws in execution for suppressing of swearing, gaming, &c. —Among many other instances, that prove the charges of

the wants of their fellow creatures.—And to these it is proposed to enforce on every occasion

of cruelty and neglect, against parish officers in lone places, not to be groundless, the affair of Datchworth in Hertfordshire, an affair which perhaps was never fully investigated, must be fresh in every one's memory.

The obstinacy and profligacy of the poor confined in workhouses, has been strongly urged in their disfavour, as justifying all the ill treatment they suffer. The accounts of their misbehaviour must, however, come from interested persons, from parish officers and masters of workhouses; and may, therefore, be justly suspected of partiality, if not direct falsehood¹. But, admitting its truth, what does it prove, but the general and pitiable depravity of human nature? Is it reasonable to suppose, that a poor man should be naturally more moral than a rich man, or that there is a greater obligation on him to be so; or that an immoral man should be punished the more for his immoralities, because of his poverty? Such doctrine will only be preached by those, who are incapable of separating the idea of virtue from that of wealth, and of vice from that of indigence.—Many of the maintainers of the

¹ Were the case as bad as it is represented by those gentlemen, it only reflects dishonour on themselves, and indicates that they are much less careful to correct the morals, than prevent the idleness of those committed to their custody.

occasion, both by example and precept, the donation of accidental charity.

It is, indeed, cause of equal admiration and regret, that mankind are in general so regardless of their conduct toward the inferior rank of their own species. Were that conduct totally unconnected with our portion of good or evil in another state of existence, were it as totally unconnected with our present benefit or injury, it must surely be no common satisfaction, to behold the regard and veneration, excited by the extension of our disinterested beneficence.

But although a good name, according to the observation of Solomon, is better than

poor will swear prophanely and drink to excess, as well as the poor themselves; but would think it hard to be starved, and whipped, and poisoned, as a punishment for their swearing and drunkenness. I am no advocate for vice, but would bring things home to men's own bosoms. It was a very just remark of the late Mr. Fielding, whose opportunities of knowledge in affairs of this kind, were as little circumscribed as most men's; that "the vices of the poor are better known, than their miseries: they starve, and freeze, and rot, among themselves; they beg, and steal, and rob, among their betters."

precious

precious ointment, the man of benevolent disposition possesses a satisfaction still superior; a satisfaction independant of the approbation or censure of others; and, verifying the axiom of the philosophers, finds his virtue in this respect to be its own reward.

How uncomfortable must be the situation of him, whose mind is the constant residence of anger, hatred, and revenge, furies, produced and fostered by himself! and whose intercourse with his neighbour, is a continual state of hostility, a perpetual reciprocation of punishment and of mischief! How comfortable the situation of him, whose mind is a fountain of philanthropy, effusing its salutary streams to the very outcasts of creation!

“ To provide for the wants of the poor,
 “ to assist them in the hour of affliction,
 “ would, indeed,” may some say, “ be a
 “ pleasure surpassing the pleasures of sense
 “ and of imagination, were the care of
 “ the reliever repaid by the gratitude of
 “ the relieved: but too many of the indi-
 “ gent, when the present necessity is over,
 “ will injure the very hand that has been
 “ extended for their assistance; a beha-
 “ viour, which, far from exciting the com-

“ placence of the injured, must necessarily
 “ excite their detestation !”

But thou, who indulgest disgust at the ingratitude of thy dependants, pause a moment, and say, if thou dost well to be angry; remember they are men, and that thou art a man also. Shalt thou then, though by nature their equal, yet by the advantages of education so greatly their superior, instead of unweariedly persisting to conquer evil with good, become worse even than them, by returning evil for evil? Shall the follies of ignorance appear unpardonable crimes to the eye of knowledge? Shall the hand of power take vengeance for the idle insults of impotent malevolence? Thou sayest “ the poor want “ thankfulness”; inspect thine own heart, and there read thine own condemnation; thou wilt find thyself more criminal, than the subjects of thy censure. Thou daily receivest blessings from the Lord of the universe, without experiencing an adequate sense of gratitude: what right, then, hast thou to expect from thy fellow creature, for some feeble exertion of thy kindness, what thyself art unable to render to thy Creator for his innumerable mercies?

Much

Much hath been said on the effects of poverty, something, it may be expected, should be said on its causes: and as prevention is better than cure, it may be thought more necessary to attempt the removal of the latter, than the relief of the former. Poor there have always been, and notwithstanding every possible provision and regulation, always will be: it is, perhaps, so disposed by the ordination of an all wise Providence, to afford opportunity for the exercise of that amiable virtue charity; an exercise, by which the human heart becomes insensibly amended, imperceptibly replenished with generous sentiments and tender dispositions. That poverty, however, is more prevalent in the same place, at one time than at another; and that it is more so, in this nation, in the present age, than in the past, is generally apprehended: and supposing this to be the case, the origin of its prevalence must be sought for in the conduct of the great, a conduct which has unhappily formed the national character, and that character is *Extravagance* *.

In

* In the preceding part of these observations, frequent mention has been made of avarice, as the ruling passion

In the days of our ancestors, luxury was in a manner confined to the peerage ; they were separated from the people, as much by their wealth, as by their station, and, consequently, none would aim at imitation, when none could hope to arrive at equality. But the case is now very different : our military and commercial acquisitions have introduced an inundation of riches, which has broken down the barrier. Titular nobility has been made cheap, and conferred on many of the opulent plebeians, and is indeed the only criterion by which they can be distinguished from their neighbours. The influx of money to the hands

passion of this country ; but the Avarice of the present age is not the Avarice of the past ; an Avarice, which sneakingly pilfered from the wants of its own back and its own belly, to replenish its coffers ; but a monster composed (like the print of the Beau and Skeleton) of two halves more nearly related in reality than appearance, a bold rapacity and a lavish Prodigality ; snatching with one hand and dispersing with the other, and unpropitious to the poor only. The universality of the prejudice against poverty is astonishing : even those characters, who squander their money with the most unthinking profusion, who will lend, or give, or throw away, will rarely bestow alms on a beggar.

of

of individuals has proved so disproportionate to all common expences, that the possessors have racked their invention for new methods of expending; and when invention has failed, have looked round them in vacancy of thought for assistance *.

The second order of people, the merchant and upper tradesman, observant of the hint, have imported or imitated every

* This enormous accumulation of wealth in the hands of individuals, is, in one respect, particularly injurious to society; it destroys every idea of œconomy: provisions, must be purchased and paid for by those the dignity of whose characters will not permit them to make the price of the market, matter of enquiry, or the tradesman's bill matter of examination: the servant, who transacts the business of the department, connives at the imposition and rapacity of the seller, and what the rich *will pay*, the poor *must pay also*. Nor is the evil effect of this negligence confined to the capital, if provisions are sold there at a higher rate than in other places, they will by some means or other be brought thither. The consumption of that enormous quantity of good food, wickedly wasted in the compositions of modern cookery, is an evil which would not be permitted in a well regulated community.—How shocking the consideration, that what would subsist a family for several days, is sometimes destroyed to form one meal for the ravenous appetite of one capricious epicure!

super-

superfluity of every civilized nation in the universe: but the ambition of these caterers for vanity, has been too powerful for their prudence: while they have profited by the folly, they have emulated the ostentation of their superiors, and their gains being unequal to their disbursements, bankruptcy and poverty have been their portion.

For the production of many of these superfluous manufactures, the most ingenious of the third order of people, the laborious artificers, are employed at unreasonable wages. The case is the same with these, as with their betters, the greater their income the greater their expence. Their earnings are squandered in the nocturnal revels of the alehouse; and on the approach of age or sickness, or when the demand for the novelty of the day is over, and employment is wanting, the consequence must be misery too shocking for description.

Such is the prospect of the metropolis, nor will the provinces present us with a view more agreeable.—Where are the princes of the people, the lords of villages, the patrons and employers of the poor? —All fled to that favourite scene of riot
and

and dissipation *. If they vouchsafe a transient visit to their paternal domains, to view their rural improvements, those transpositions of wood, earth, and water, which some arbiter of modern taste has told them they must make to be compleatly fashionable; what are the advantages derived from this temporary presence? The inclosure of commons for the pasturage of horses, designed for exportation to our enemies; the demolition of cottages; and the accumulation of farms, *adding house to house, and field to field, till there be no* PLACE FOR THE POOR IN THE EARTH † ‡.

If

* Mean time by pleasure's lying tales allur'd,
From the bright sun and living breeze ye stray;
And deep, in London's gloomy haunts immur'd,
Brood o'er your fortune's, freedom's, health's decay!
O! blind of choice, and to yourselves untrue!
The young grove shoots, their bloom the fields
renew,
The mansion asks its lord, the swains their friend;
While he doth riot's orgies haply share,
Or tempt the gamester's dark destroying snare,
Or at some courtly shrine with slavish incense bend.
Akenfide's Ode to the country gentlemen
of England.

† Among other causes of poverty may be ranked the frequency of country fairs, and the observation of those
days

If, then the conduct of the great be thus injurious to the poor, to whom but the great

days, miscalled holidays. They are equally detrimental to the circumstances and morals of the laborious part of mankind : they are pretences for the indulgence of inclination, in the indolent and vicious ; and temptations to those, whom prudence or natural dislike to excess keep generally sober. These, often seduced by the importunities of bad company, break from their wonted course of industry, and return to it with difficulty. The number of fairs might surely be lessened without detriment to trade ; and, if holidays cannot be observed with more advantage to the cause of religion and virtue, the observation of them had better be totally abolished. Horse races, cock fightings, cricket matches, and the visits of those pests of society, itinerant mountebanks, are all, for the same reason, nuisances to the community. State lotteries may justly be accounted another cause of poverty : the poor as well as the rich are ambitious ; and, if they save for nothing else, will sometimes save for the hope of a sudden advance in their station. When with labour and penury, they have accumulated a trifling sum, this hope tempts them to become adventurers, and while the *wheel of fortune* is pregnant with their imaginary future greatness, their attention is diverted from their proper employments, and anxiety and dissipation take place of industry and care. At length *the mountain brings forth a mouse* ; the *blank* is drawn ; the golden dream vanishes ; and disappointment produces the same effect with expectation :

the

great can the poor look up for assistance? should not those who have laid a burthen on the shoulders of the people with one hand, endeavour to remove it with the other? can power and affluence be employed to better purpose, than in alleviating the miseries of the impotent and needy? But the great have other avocations.

—AMUSEMENT is the grand business of life! and amid the tempest of amusement, the cry of distress is too feeble to be heard. But what, O ye triflers, or worse than triflers, of the age! are these indispensable engagements, which must supersede your duty to your maker, your country, your fellow creatures and every other consideration? They are indeed too various to admit of enumeration: many of them perhaps are known only to yourselves;

the disappointed become indolent and desponding; and thus misery is the consequence of deviation from the path of contentment.

‡ The engrossing of farms is certainly injurious to the poor, in more respects than one; the more extensive the possession of property, the greater is the power of the possessor; and the fewer masters there are, the more the servants will be oppressed in their work and their wages.

are

are confined to the limits of that *world*, which is commonly called *fashionable*: but many of their denominations stand rubric on the walls of your streets; and many to the honour of your taste, stand on record in the pages of your advertising papers of periodical intelligence, where the hand of avaritious imposition holds forth to the eye of folly, the vaineſt of vanities, and the abſurdeſt of abſurdities.

Have ye not your farces and burlettas, your dialogue without nature, and your muſic without ſentiment; your puppet ſhews, and your pantomimes, with their monſtrous incongruities and inſufferable indecencies, degrading your theatres to a level with the ſtage of an itinerant medicaster? Have ye not your midnight maſquerades, and your morning dances; your Coterie, and your Pantheon: your public ſcenes of levity and whim, and your private retreats for lewdneſs? Have ye not your ſports of the turf, where vanity and avarice unite to produce cruelty, to a beautiful and uſeful part of the animal creation; and, to compleat all, your gaming tables, where vanity and avarice unite to ſtretch the human heart on the rack of anxiety,

anxiety, and the sudden vicissitudes of fortune distort your countenances with the malignant triumph or despondence of infernals?

But, in active wickedness, there must be satiety and weariness; and to preclude the intrusion of thought in the moment of solitude, amusements of a character more neutral, but not more consistent with reason or productive of advantage, are in readiness to relieve you. For this, you have your auctions and exhibitions*; your professors of manual dexterity; your equestrian posture masters; and your mechanical Museum, where an ingenuity, perhaps not to be paralleled, has been misapplied to the service of false taste, and extravagant flattery†. For this, you have

* It is not by any means intended to censure or discourage the imitative arts.—Our ingenious exhibitions of paintings cannot be liable to exception, any further than as by admitting immodest representations, they tend to the corruption of morals, or as by giving opportunity, amid the present rage for amusement, for persons of little taste and less fortune to spend money they have other uses for.

† Some, who have seen this celebrated exhibition, cannot without difficulty separate the idea of the closing scene from that of an *Apotheosis*.

your

your monthly chronicles of scandal and debauchery ; your romances and novels†, those “ thieves of time”, where one insipid tale is again and again repeated in language a little diversified ; while curiosity, excited by the gradual developement of improbable events, lures the infatuated reader through a perplexing wilderness of uninteresting characters and unnatural incidents, where no fruit of useful knowledge or fountain of unpolluted instruction is met with to repay his labour ; or worse, far worse, through a region of deleterious enchantment, where the hand of the Genius of seduction withdraws the veil of modesty from the eyes of youthful Innocency, and permits her to gaze on the painted scene of delusive happiness that

† It is much to be regretted, that of the small number of specimens of this kind of literary composition, which have proceeded from the pen of real genius, there are few, which, on account of their tendency, are proper for public perusal ; very few, from which mental poison, rather than medicine, may not be extracted. The *Grandison* of *Richardson*, the *Rasselas* of *Johnson*, the *Almorán and Hamet* of *Hawkesworth*, the *Fool of Quality* by *Brooke*, and perhaps one or two more, in this respect merit an honourable exemption from censure.

conceals

conceals the gulph of ruin.—Such are the objects of your pursuit! and is not the public proffer of such objects* to your notice, a sarcasm on your intellects and on your conduct, severer than any the pen of satire could have produced?

But censure and remonstrance will, in general, be vain; custom is too powerful for shame, and the allurements of vice for the admonitions of virtue. But some of you can think; and some of you, perhaps, may believe.—Awake then to serious reflection! the hand of Time must write *Finis* on the page of Life and a retrospect of its contents must be taken, and if he, whose history is the History of inoffensive indolence, does not escape condemnation; and if he whose few crimson periods relate only a few instances of injury to his neighbour, must repent with anguish of remorse unspeakable; what must be the portion of continual ridiculous and mischievous Activity!

* The common address of the advertisers of the fashionable entertainments, is “*To the nobility and gentry*”.

A P P E N D I X I.

IN the course of the preceding observations, something has been said respecting those, with whom it is the fashion to declaim against the present laws for maintenance of the poor; and who are either ignorant enough to believe, or artful enough to represent those laws, as absolutely and indiscriminately compulsory; as irresistibly forcing money from such as are unable to pay it, and as constraining the extension of relief to the unworthy, in preference to the worthy. There are ears on which truth must be "hammered by repetition," before they can hear it; there are eyes for which truth must be placed in a glaring light before they can perceive it: these gentlemen shall therefore once again be informed; that there are perhaps no other laws in being, wherein the power of administration is so amply reposed in the hands
of

of the *People* *. The amount of the sum to be raised, and the choice of the persons to be assessed are left totally to the determination of the churchwardens and overseers, who in this respect are accountable to no superior. Nor is their acceptance or rejection of applicants for relief, obnoxious to any interposal, but from the magistrate; and his interference in favour of the poor, will not often be exerted: the weight of

* By the 43d of Eliz. the churchwardens and overseers are appointed to hold vestries, and to tax their respective parishes to the support of their poor. But what poor is it, which they are obliged to maintain? Why, “ the children of all such whose parents *shall not by* “ *the said churchwardens and overseers, or the greater* “ *part of them be thought able to maintain their* “ *children; and all such persons, married or unmarried,* “ *having no means to maintain them, and using no ordinary* “ *and daily trade; and the lame, impotent, old, blind,* “ *and such other among them, being poor and not able to* “ *to work.*” 43 Eliz. c. 3. §. 1.

The most obdurate enemy of the poor will probably be ashamed to assert, that the lame, old, blind, and such as cannot work, ought not to be maintained; and as the churchwardens and overseers are constituted judges who can work, and who cannot; what more can be desired?

interest lies in the other scale, and will be most likely to preponderate. But were the obligation to relieve all in distress, indispensable and inevitable, without regard to their past or present conduct; what must be thought of the principles of those who would wish it otherwise; of those who with useless revenge would oppress the poor in the time of adversity, because their behaviour was absurd in the time of prosperity? Death has never been deemed a proper punishment for indolence or folly, yet it matters little or nothing, whether life be taken by an act of violence, or suffered to expire by a course of wilful or negligent retention of assistance. It will not, perhaps, be any breach of charity to assert, that the principal motive of those, who thus officiously propose the abolishing of all laws for the relief of the indigent, is that very despicable one of saving their own pockets; and that were their power adequate to their will, they would actually *starve the poor*.

A P P E N D I X II.

PERPETUAL imprisonment has been repeatedly proposed by different writers, as a proper punishment for several crimes* which by our present laws are made capital.—Blood undoubtedly requires blood ; but for violations of property unaggravated by acts of cruelty, the laws of God, of nature, and of equity, certainly require a very different penalty. Death as a punishment for theft has been tried, and found

* It may be said that few are hanged for small crimes only, though advantage may sometimes be taken of the commission of a small crime to hang a great villain, who could not otherwise have been capitally convicted, and possibly with a view to such advantage, the penalty of death was appointed for so many venial transgressions, and, at the same time, a dispensing power of reprieve annexed to the office of a judge, and of pardon to the prerogative of a king. Nor, on any other presumption than this, can I suppose, that the spirit of our laws meant to value life at a shilling.

inef-

ineffectual: perhaps no nation on earth, is so prodigal of life as the English, and perhaps no nation on earth is so much infested with thieves. I will not say that the frequency of murder is owing to the frequency of our executions; but such spectacles certainly harden the human heart: those who see life taken and resigned in so careless a manner, will not have a proper value for their own lives or the lives of others. For a confirmed habit of theft, perpetual imprisonment will be the properest punishment; for where the will is irrecoverably perverted, the power of action should be effectually restricted. For intentional murder, perpetual imprisonment will also be the properest punishment; for he who attempts, or indulges a deliberate design to attempt the life of another, is no more fit to be at liberty than a maniac.—To the plan of perpetual imprisonment has been weakly objected, the incompatibility of slavery with the English constitution, but the game laws, the laws against debtors, and indeed every law which invests one man with power over the body of another, establish slavery; and

and in some cases a slavery much less necessary than that in question.

Were this plan to take place, particular regard should be had to the health of the imprisoned: the neglect of such regard at present is a shocking instance of cruelty. Many who are committed to prison are committed on suspicion only, and some are really innocent; to such it is surely injury enough to suffer false imprisonment, without suffering disease and death. Even the guilty ought to have the chance allowed them by law and not be destroyed by sickness before they can be brought to trial.



F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page. Line.

- 11. 8. *For Dr. Brown, read Dr. Burn.*
- 14. 20. *For their interests, read the interests of the Poor.*
- 15. 9. *For Englishmen, read Englishman.*
- 23. note 5. *For it, poignancy, read its poignancy.*
- 43. 7. *For a cruelty, read the cruelty.*
- 48. note 6. *For supplies, read supply.*
- 55. 9. *For dimunition, read diminution.*
- 64. 8. *For controvertable, read controvertible.*
- 21, 22. *For indulgences, read indulgence.*
- 74. 1. *For distinction, read distinctions.*
- 82. note 1. line 2. *For on, read or.*
- 85. 9. *For dispenced, read dispensed.*
- 91. 14. *For intellects, read intellect.*
- 95. 7. *For make the, read make a.*
- 99. 6. *For subdue turbulence, read subdue the turbulence.*
- 100. note 13, 14. *For unimproved, read unimproved.*
- 104. note 11. *For is, read are.*

Any other literal escapes of the press, the reader is requested
to correct with his pen.